The Prophecies Of The Old Testament, Respecting Messiah

Literally Fulfilled in Jesus

Dr. John Gill. D.D.

THE PROPHECIES OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

RESPECTING THE MESSIAH

Considered and Proved to Be Literally Fulfilled in Jesus

BY

JOHN GILL, D.D.

A Carefully Modernised Edition

THE JOHN GILL LIBRARY

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ABOUT THIS EDITION

This edition has been prepared to make John Gill's work more accessible to the modern reader while preserving the substance, structure, theology, and argument of the original.

Gill's language has been carefully modernised where older forms of expression, punctuation, sentence construction, or vocabulary might obscure his meaning. Long and complex sentences have occasionally been divided for clarity, and spelling and punctuation have been regularised according to modern British usage.

No attempt has been made to rewrite Gill's theology, soften his arguments, or replace his distinctive voice with that of a modern editor. His doctrinal terminology, interpretations of Scripture, engagement with Jewish writers, and defence of the literal fulfilment of Old Testament prophecy in Jesus Christ have been retained.

The original order of the work has also been preserved. Gill's numbered arguments and divisions remain wherever they form part of his reasoning, though their presentation has sometimes been clarified to prevent confusion. Scripture quotations have been retained in the language of the Authorised Version, commonly known as the King James Version.

Ancient names, historical references, Jewish writings, and theological terms have generally been preserved as Gill used them. Where the original wording could be expressed more clearly without changing its meaning, it has been carefully revised.

This is therefore not an abridgement, summary, or new interpretation of Gill's work. It is a faithful modern-language edition intended to allow his arguments to be read with greater ease while remaining recognisably and substantially his own.

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PUBLISHER'S PREFACE

My understanding of biblical prophecy and eschatology has developed considerably since my conversion in 1970.

In my autobiography, Converted on LSD Trip, I described how I educated myself in the Christian faith through reading the bible and John Gill's Body of Divinity over a period of approximately three years. That sustained study had a profound influence upon me and eventually led me to join the Bierton Strict Baptist Church.

Gill's careful treatment of Christian doctrine taught me the importance of examining every subject by the authority of Scripture. His understanding of the Old Testament prophecies relating to the Messiah was also of great help to me. He demonstrated how the promises and predictions concerning the Messiah were literally fulfilled in the birth, life, ministry, sufferings, death, resurrection, ascension, and exaltation of Jesus Christ.

This present work, The Prophecies of the Old Testament Respecting the Messiah, Considered and Proved to Be Literally Fulfilled in Jesus, is particularly valuable in this respect. Gill carefully gathers together the Old Testament prophecies concerning the Messiah and shows their exact and united fulfilment in Jesus.

His concern was not merely to present an interesting study of prophecy. His purpose was to establish and defend the truth that Jesus is the promised Messiah. He answered the objections of Jewish writers and Deists and showed that the prophetic Scriptures provide a clear and consistent testimony to Christ.

This book, however, does not enter fully into the prophecies concerning the second coming of Christ. Since 1970, I have continued to consider these passages and have become persuaded that a more useful and scripturally consistent understanding of many New Testament prophecies is available.

In the early years of my Christian life, I encountered strongly futurist interpretations concerning Israel, the great tribulation, the Antichrist, the second coming of Christ, and the end of the world. These interpretations placed the greater part of New Testament prophecy in the distant future.

As I continued to examine the Scriptures, I came to question this approach. I became persuaded that many passages concerning the

coming of Christ, the judgement of Jerusalem, the end of the age, and the passing away of the old covenant order were fulfilled in the first century, particularly in the events surrounding the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70.

This developing understanding led me to appreciate more fully the importance of fulfilled prophecy as evidence of the truth of the Christian faith.

Gill's work is therefore an important reminder that prophecy must be interpreted in the light of its fulfilment. The promises concerning the Messiah were not vague predictions capable of being applied to numerous persons or events. They were definite revelations which found their true accomplishment in Jesus.

The same principle should govern our consideration of the prophecies concerning His coming in judgement and the end of the Jewish age.

For readers who wish to examine these matters further, I have included a list of recommended books at the end of this volume. These include:

1. The Parousia, by James Stuart Russell;

2. What Happened in AD 70?;

3. and The Final Decade Before the End, by Edward E. Stevens.

These works are presented as further reading for those who wish to examine the historical fulfilment of New Testament prophecy and the events surrounding the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70.

This modernised edition has been prepared to make Gill's argument more accessible while preserving his theology, reasoning, use of Scripture, and engagement with Jewish sources. It is not an abridgement or reinterpretation of his work.

My purpose in republishing it is to encourage the reader to examine the prophetic testimony of the Old Testament and to recognise in its fulfilment a powerful confirmation that Jesus Christ is indeed the Son of God and the promised Messiah.

As with every theological work, the reader is encouraged to examine all that is written by the authority of Holy Scripture.

David Clarke
Bierton Particular Baptists

PREFACE

The purpose of the following pages is to examine the prophecies of the Old Testament concerning the Messiah, and to prove that they were literally fulfilled in Jesus, against the objections of both Jews and Deists.

I have therefore gathered together the objections made by Jewish writers to these prophecies, particularly because, so far as I know, the same objections have also been used by Deists.

As far as I have been able, I have consulted the writings of both ancient and later Jewish authors, and have shown that, in most, if not all, of the prophecies considered, they understood them to refer to the Messiah.

I do not produce these authorities as decisive in the controversy, but as the convictions and concessions of adversaries—adversaries who have shown themselves bitter and implacable toward Christianity. For this reason, I believe their testimony deserves the serious consideration of the Deist.

I cite the ancient Jewish writers to show the understanding of the early synagogue, and the later Jewish writers to demonstrate the strength of conviction upon their minds. They could not have failed to observe the use Christians made of these prophecies; and although they were often pressed by them, they were nevertheless compelled to acknowledge them as prophecies concerning the Messiah.

For this reason, the testimony of later Jewish writers may appear to possess particular strength and force.

So that the reader may not be uncertain about what I mean by ancient and later Jewish writers, let it be understood that, by ancient Jews, I mean those who wrote, or are believed to have written, within the first five or six centuries after Christ, such as the authors of the Targums, the Talmuds, the Rabboth, the Zohar, and similar works.

By later Jews, I mean those who wrote within the last five or six centuries, such as Maimonides, Jarchi, Aben Ezra, Kimchi, and others.

The author of The Scheme of Literal Prophecy, whose objections I have considered throughout this work, has advanced several claims

concerning Jewish belief in the Messiah which I believe must be addressed here.

First, he appears to suggest that belief in the Messiah was not originally a fundamental article of Jewish faith, but only became so in the eleventh century, when their confession of faith was drawn up by Rabbi Moses Maimonides.

It is not denied that Maimonides arranged the Jewish confession of faith into thirteen articles at about that time. These articles, as Leo Modena observes, are generally received by the Jews without contradiction.

But this no more proves that the article concerning the Messiah first became a fundamental article of their faith at that time than it proves that belief in the unity of the Divine Being also began then. Yet it must be acknowledged that belief in the unity of God had always belonged to the faith of the Jewish church.

Maimonides did not invent these articles. He merely gathered and arranged them. It is therefore highly reasonable to suppose that he presented them, not as new opinions held by a few individuals, but as doctrines which expressed the ancient, constant, and general belief of his people. They were accordingly received as such without hesitation.

Rabbi Joseph Albo is the only person usually cited as denying that the article concerning the Messiah is fundamental. He reduced the Jewish confession of faith to three principal heads, which he called roots:

1. belief in the Divine Being;

2. belief in the law of Moses;

3. belief in a future state of rewards and punishments.

He believed that all the other articles could be reduced to these three.

Albo was unwilling to acknowledge belief in the Messiah as a root or fundamental principle. His purpose in doing so was plainly to oppose Christianity, whose chief fundamental principle is faith in Jesus the Messiah.

Nevertheless, although he would not acknowledge this article as

a root, he admitted that it was a branch arising from the third root—the doctrine of rewards and punishments.

He also declared; that all who receive the law of Moses ought to believe in the Messiah; that the prophets foretold his coming; that his coming is sure and evident; that whoever does not believe in the coming of the Messiah denies the words of the prophets; and that such a person transgresses the affirmative commandments.

Therefore, although Albo would not describe belief in the Messiah as a fundamental root—and in this opinion he stood alone and had no followers—he nevertheless acknowledged it to be a branch arising from a fundamental doctrine.

We should therefore be far from concluding, on the basis of this one man's opinion, that belief in the Messiah was not a fundamental article of Jewish faith. Indeed, the contrary is made even more evident by his own concessions.

Second, the same author suggests that many Jews themselves appeared to have no expectation of a Messiah. He refers to the Sadducees and Scribes, the Samaritan Jews, Josephus and certain Jews of his time, Rabbi Hillel in the third century, and even Maimonides, who, he says, spoke of the matter with considerable indifference.

As to the Sadducees, they expected the Messiah as eagerly as the rest of the Jews. They were as intent upon exposing Jesus, whom they did not believe to be the true Messiah, and were as violent in opposing Him and His followers as any others. They would hardly have concerned themselves so deeply with the matter if they had not believed that a Messiah was to come.

Some have maintained that the Karaites descended from the ancient Sadducees and held the same doctrines. Yet it is certain that the Karaites expected a Messiah no less than the other Jews.

As to the Scribes, although they were, as this author describes them, men devoted to the letter of Scripture, they nevertheless believed that the Christ, or Messiah, was the Son of David, and that Elijah must first come. It is true that the author presents what he says concerning the Sadducees and Scribes only as a conjecture, but it appears to be a conjecture without any proper foundation.

With regard to the Samaritan Jews, nothing is more evident than that, in the days of Jesus, they expected a Messiah. This belief appears

to have been generally received among them, as may be seen from the woman of Samaria, who said:

"I know that Messiah cometh, which is called Christ."

It is acknowledged that the modern Samaritans also possess notions concerning a Messiah, although those notions are confused and differ considerably among them. This need not surprise us, since they reject the writings of the prophets and confine themselves to the five books of Moses.

In one of their letters to Scaliger, they state that the name of the Messiah among them is Hashab. They do not appear to have understood the meaning of this name, though it seems to be an abbreviation of the expression meaning "He who is to come." By this description both the Samaritan and Jerusalem Jews understood the Messiah, as is evident from the words of the Samaritan woman already mentioned.

As to Josephus and certain other Jews of his time, who believed that Vespasian was the prince who was to come, it is evident that they expected a Messiah, though they mistook the person and wrongly supposed Vespasian to be he. Nothing contrary to the expectation of a Messiah can fairly be concluded from this.

Rabbi Hillel did indeed declare that Israel was to have no Messiah because, as he supposed, they had already enjoyed him in the days of Hezekiah. But this was only the opinion of one man. Despite his authority, the Jews continued to expect a Messiah.

Furthermore, Hillel's statement did not amount to a denial that there was a Messiah, but rather to a mistaken opinion concerning the time of his coming.

As for Maimonides speaking indifferently of the Messiah, this need not surprise us, whether in him or in any other Jewish writer who has spoken in the same manner. The Jews had been grievously disappointed in their expectations, and they had come to see little need of the Messiah and to expect very little from him.

Third, the same author would have us believe that the Jewish expectation of a Messiah was founded, not upon the literal sense of Scripture, but upon allegorical and traditional interpretations.

But if this were so, how did the Scribes, whom this author himself acknowledges to have been men devoted to the letter of Scripture,

come to expect a Messiah and to declare that He was to be the Son of David?

Surely those who are supposed to have rejected many prevailing Jewish notions which were not founded upon the letter of Scripture would also have rejected belief in the Messiah, if that belief had no foundation there.

Furthermore, the Karaites, or Scripturians, were an ancient Jewish sect who rejected the mystical, enigmatical, traditional, and allegorical interpretations of the Rabbis. They adhered strictly and closely to the literal sense of Scripture, yet they expected a Messiah no less than other Jews.

From where, then, could this expectation have arisen? Upon what could it have been founded, except the literal sense of Scripture?

It is therefore a mistake to claim that belief in the Messiah cannot be established from the prophecies of the Old Testament without resorting to mystical or allegorical interpretation.

In their first, literal, and obvious sense, these prophecies concern Him, as I trust the following examination will make clear.

Fourth, I cannot but greatly wonder that this author should consider it most probable that many of the passages in which the Messiah is expressly named in the Chaldee Paraphrases are later interpolations.

This is especially surprising because he also believes those writings to be much more recent, and of a later date, than the Jews themselves maintain.

The later their date is supposed to be, the less reason there is to think that passages concerning the Messiah were inserted into them by interpolation.

Surely it cannot reasonably be imagined that the Jews would have altered their own Targums in this way after they had seen the use Christians made of these prophecies, both against them and in defence of Christianity.

Indeed, there are few things by which the Jews are more perplexed and confounded than when these paraphrases are brought against them.

There is therefore strong reason to believe that the passages in which the Messiah is expressly named are far from being

interpolations. If these writings were not held in such sacred regard among them that they dared not corrupt them, they would more probably have removed such passages long ago.

The reason this author gives for his suspicion is that Josephus says the Jews who held the common expectation that a Messiah would arise from their nation founded their hope upon one ambiguous oracle or prophecy contained in their sacred books.

To this I reply that Josephus does indeed mention an oracle or prophecy found in their sacred writings which declared that, about that time, one from their country would rule over the world.

He calls this oracle ambiguous and says that it was one of the chief causes which stirred the Jews to war.

But Josephus nowhere says that the whole Jewish expectation of a Messiah rested upon one doubtful prophecy.

He speaks only of their expectation that this ruler would arise from their nation at that particular time.

The ambiguity lay in the expression that he would arise from their country. Most Jews understood this to mean that he would be born there, while Josephus interpreted it as meaning that he would enter upon his government there, and therefore applied the prophecy to Vespasian.

This passage therefore gives no reason to conclude that the references to the Messiah in the Chaldee Paraphrases are interpolations.

The Jews might possess many plain prophecies upon which their expectation of a Messiah was founded, several of which are pointed out in those paraphrases, while Josephus referred only to one doubtful prophecy concerning the time of his appearance and the country from which he would arise.

That prophecy stirred the Jews to war and encouraged them to continue in it with great obstinacy.

Josephus believed that they had misunderstood it. Yet, sadly, the true cause of their error—and the reason it proved fatal to them—was that the Messiah spoken of in the prophecy had already come.

I conclude by asking the reader to observe that I do not present the Old Testament prophecies concerning the Messiah's second coming as having already been literally fulfilled in Jesus, but as

prophecies which will yet be literally fulfilled in Him.

The reason I have included them is to make the whole scheme of prophecy more complete.

Since all the other prophecies concerning the Messiah have received a literal fulfilment in Jesus, there is strong reason to believe that these also will be fulfilled in Him, especially since Jesus and His apostles have given us reason to expect such a fulfilment.

I have not entered into an examination of the authenticity of the Book of Daniel or of the first two chapters of Matthew's Gospel, both of which the author of The Scheme of Literal Prophecy has called into question.

I have accepted them as genuine parts of the sacred writings.

The reason I have not attempted an inquiry of this kind, even when considering passages from these portions of Scripture, is that I was unwilling to interrupt the reader by breaking the course and connection of the prophecies.

I must acknowledge that what this author has advanced upon this subject deserves consideration. I trust that some of the learned writers engaged in this controversy will judge it worthy of their attention.

I shall add only this: my purpose in writing the following pages is to conduct an honest and impartial inquiry after truth, and to make an attempt to establish and promote it.

As I have treated the argument with candour and moderation, I hope that, if I should be found mistaken in anything I have advanced, I shall be treated with the same candour.

I shall be sincerely thankful to anyone who clearly shows me such an error.

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The Messiah is frequently spoken of in the Old Testament under the character of a Redeemer, and the Jews always expected Him as such. Many passages might be produced in proof of this, but I shall mention one in particular because it is cited in the New Testament. The passage is Isaiah 59:20:

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CHAPTER 1

The Introduction, with a Particular Consideration of the First Prophecy Concerning the Messiah, Recorded in Genesis 3:15

Although the prophecies of the Old Testament concerning the Messiah, which received their exact fulfilment in Jesus, are not the only proofs of the truth of the Christian religion, since there are many others, including the nature, importance, and tendency of the doctrines of the gospel, the truth and reality of the events recorded in the New Testament, the miracles of Christ, His resurrection from the dead, and other such evidences, they are nevertheless real and unquestionable proofs, and deserve our particular consideration. This is especially so because Christ and His apostles frequently appealed to them in confirmation of the truth of what they taught.

Salvation through Jesus Christ is the great doctrine of the gospel, and the sum and substance of the Christian religion. Concerning this salvation, the apostle Peter writes:

> *"Of which salvation the prophets have enquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow."*
>
> —1 Peter 1:10–11

One principal branch of this salvation is the forgiveness of sins through the blood of Christ. Concerning Him, all the prophets bear witness:

> *"That through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins."*
>
> —Acts 10:43

Indeed, Jesus and His apostles declared no other things than those which Moses and the prophets had said would come to pass:

> *"That Christ should suffer, and that he should be the first that should rise from the dead, and should shew light unto the people, and to the Gentiles."*
>
> —Acts 26:22–23

It was the common and usual practice of Christ to direct His hearers to search the Scriptures of the Old Testament. "They are they," He says, "which testify of me"; and He expressly declares that Moses wrote of Him. He continually spoke of His sufferings, and of the several circumstances attending them, as things foretold by the prophets.

Therefore, after His resurrection, in order to lead His disciples into a fuller understanding of these things,

> *"Beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself."*
>
> —Luke 24:27
>
> *He also declared that all things must be fulfilled which were written concerning Him in the law of Moses, in the prophets, and in the Psalms.*

The marks and characteristics of the Messiah, as fixed by the prophets in the Old Testament, are plainly and visibly found in Jesus. This has provided no small confirmation of the faith, hope, and joy of those who believe in Him.

Thus Philip said to Nathanael, when they were among the first to believe in Him and their hearts were filled with joy at the first knowledge of Him:

> *"We have found him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph."*
>
> —John 1:45

Although this kind of evidence is not the only foundation of the Christian religion, it must nevertheless be regarded as a very considerable part of it. For those who believe in Jesus are

> *"Built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone."*
>
> —Ephesians 2:20

A recent author has attempted to undermine this foundation in several works concerning prophecy. It therefore highly concerns all who value Jesus the Redeemer to defend it against such bold attacks and daring insults upon the best and most excellent religion in the

world.

I am aware that several prophecies have already been examined in the present controversy with great learning and judgment, and have been sufficiently cleared of the objections raised against them. I am also conscious of my own weakness and inability to undertake such a work. Nevertheless, having the glory of the Redeemer at heart, being fully persuaded of the goodness of the cause, and desiring to contribute whatever I can toward maintaining the honour of Jesus, confirming believers, and convincing unbelievers, I have undertaken to consider the prophecies of the Old Testament concerning the Messiah.

These are the prophecies which are either expressly cited as messianic in the New Testament or are generally referred to Him by Christian interpreters. I shall endeavour to prove that they truly and properly belong to the Messiah and that they were actually and exactly fulfilled in Jesus. This must be regarded as no inconsiderable evidence of the truth of the Christian religion.

I shall begin with Genesis 3:15, the first prophecy concerning the Messiah. Of Him it was written in the volume of the book, in its first roll—in the head or beginning of the book of God—that He should do the will of God. That will was nothing less than to destroy Satan, the old serpent, together with his works, and to rescue sinful and miserable mankind from his hands.

This was in accordance with the original prophecy, which was given shortly after man's apostasy from God and stands at the head and beginning of the Bible. From the time it was first given, the Messiah has been spoken of

> *"By the mouth of all his holy prophets, which have been since the world began."*
>
> —Luke 1:70

This verse, together with the one preceding it, contains the judicial sentence pronounced by God upon the serpent for its part in man's apostasy from his Creator. A particular account is given in this chapter of the true causes of that fall, the subtle methods employed to bring it about, and the dreadful consequences which followed.

For a fuller and clearer explanation of the words, two things must be considered.

I. Who, or what, is meant by the serpent upon whom this sentence was pronounced.

II. The several parts and branches of that sentence.

First, it will be proper to consider who, or what, is meant by the serpent.

That a true and real serpent is intended, and not merely the appearance or image of one, is evident from its being numbered among the beasts of the field, from the cunning and subtlety ascribed to it, which are remarkably evident in this creature, and from the nature of the curse pronounced upon it, namely, that it should go upon its belly and eat dust all the days of its life.

Nevertheless, these words cannot be understood solely and entirely of the natural serpent. They must also be understood of Satan, acting in and through it, and of the serpent as used and directed by him. Satan was the principal agent, while the serpent was only the instrument, as will appear from the following considerations.

1. Speech is attributed to the serpent, although speech properly belongs to rational creatures. The opinion of Philo, Josephus, Aben Ezra, and others, that animals in their original and primeval state possessed the power of speech, must be rejected as entirely fabulous. The passage may, however, be properly understood of Satan speaking through the serpent. It has often been his practice to utter words through persons possessed by him, and even to give oracles through the idols of the Gentiles, which were themselves inanimate. He may therefore as readily be supposed to have formed articulate words in the mouth of the serpent as the angel of the Lord formed words in the mouth of Balaam's ass.

2. The serpent appears to be endowed with reason and understanding. A design was formed against the glory of God and the happiness of man, and it was carried out with every imaginable degree of subtlety and contrivance. Malice and envy are also plainly visible throughout the whole course of the action. Such qualities cannot properly be attributed to an irrational creature.

3. It is not reasonable to suppose that human nature, endowed with reason, knowledge, and wisdom in their full original strength

and glory, could have been outwitted, seduced, and overcome by a creature so mean and inferior to itself.

4. The writings of the New Testament consistently attribute the deception of mankind to the malice and cunning of Satan, and frequently refer to him under the name of a serpent.

5. Although the writings of the New Testament carry no authority with Jews and Deists, the understanding of the Jewish writers concerning this passage agrees perfectly with them. Many of their principal teachers acknowledge that Satan accompanied the serpent, acted within it, brought about the ruin and destruction of mankind, and was chiefly intended in the curse.

This also appears from the names which they give to the serpent. They call him Sammael, a name which signifies "the god who blinds." The apostle appears to refer to this when he says of Satan:

> *"The god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not."*
>
> —2 Corinthians 4:4

They also call him "the angel of death," because he was the cause of death to Adam and to the whole world. To this the apostle refers when he tells us that Jesus came

> *"To destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil."*
>
> —Hebrews 2:14

Moreover, nothing is more common among them than to call Satan "the old serpent," which is the very name given to him by the apostle John. This title undoubtedly arose from the account of the serpent recorded in Genesis.

Secondly, I shall now consider the several parts of the curse pronounced upon the serpent. These were that it should be the most accursed of all creatures, that it should go upon its belly, that it should eat the dust of the earth, and that it should live in continual enmity with mankind. Although it would be able to injure man, man would nevertheless have the advantage over it.

All these things have been exactly fulfilled in the serpent. It is the

most hated of all creatures; and whatever its posture may have been before the execution of this sentence, it is now a reptile which moves upon the earth, whose dust is said to be its food. There is also a real enmity between the serpent and man. Man abhors the sight of the serpent, and the serpent recoils from the presence of man. Although it may secretly and unexpectedly bite the heel, man nevertheless has the advantage over it and may easily bruise and crush its head, which, being most exposed to danger, the serpent is most careful to protect.

The infliction of this curse upon the serpent was not unreasonable, since it had been used by Satan as an instrument to accomplish his wicked design. By cursing the instrument as well as the principal agent, God more fully displayed His hatred of Satan's sin in ruining mankind, and showed how greatly it displeased Him. He would not allow either the principal or the instrument to escape.

Yet it must not be supposed that this curse concerned only the brute creature. It was chiefly directed against Satan, who alone planned and conducted the whole affair. It would not have agreed with the justice of God to punish only the instrument while allowing the principal agent to go free. Nor would there have been any proper proportion between the sentence pronounced upon man and that pronounced upon the serpent if the latter had concerned the natural serpent alone.

This will appear more clearly by considering the several parts of the sentence and the manner in which they have been executed upon Satan.

First, one part of the curse was that he should go upon his belly. This is a figurative description of creeping upon the earth, and aptly represents the great dragon, that old serpent called the Devil and Satan, being cast out of heaven into the earth, together with his angels.

The earth is now the place of his activity, and he rules in the hearts of wicked men. For this reason he is called the god and prince of this world. He can never again rise to his former place or recover his first estate in the highest heavens, and this forms no small part of his punishment.

Secondly, another part of the curse pronounced upon Satan is that he should eat the dust of the earth. This represents the low

and abject condition into which he has fallen. He no longer feeds, as formerly, upon the joys of heaven, but finds his pleasure in base, earthly, and sinful desires, in which that impure spirit delights.

The expression may also signify the complete subjection of Satan, not only to Christ, the King of kings, who has led captivity captive, but even to the weakest of His people, under whose feet the God of peace will shortly bruise him. This is no small humiliation to that proud spirit. In this sense, the expression "licking the dust" is also used in Psalm 72:9 and Micah 7:17.

Thirdly, as a further degree of punishment, God declared that He would put enmity between Satan and the woman, and between his seed and her seed. The meaning is that the woman, into whose affection Satan had insinuated himself and with whom he had held such familiar conversation, would now, upon seeing how greatly she had been deceived and seduced by him to the ruin of herself and her posterity, be filled with enmity against him.

This enmity would be placed within her as a punishment upon Satan, and would not end with her alone, but would continue in her seed. By this seed must especially be understood the Messiah, who may with particular propriety be called the Seed of the woman.

He would set Himself against Satan and against Satan's seed, namely the evil angels and the whole race of wicked and ungodly men, who would hate and persecute both Him and His people.

Fourthly, to complete the measure of Satan's just punishment, it is promised that the Seed of the woman would gain an entire victory over him:

"It shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel."

The word it plainly refers to the Seed of the woman, by whom the Messiah is intended. Nor is it any proper objection to this interpretation that the word seed is collective, since it is frequently used in Scripture to signify a single person, as in Genesis 4:25, Genesis 15:2, and Genesis 21:13.

That the Messiah is intended will appear more clearly from the following considerations.

First, the person spoken of is called the Seed of the woman, and not the seed of the man. This can properly agree with no other than the Messiah, who was to be born of a virgin, as was afterwards more

clearly revealed in Isaiah 7:14:

"Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel."

This was fulfilled in Jesus, who was truly the Seed of the woman, and of her alone. He was made of a woman, not begotten by man, but conceived in the womb of the virgin by the power of the Holy Ghost.

Secondly, the Hebrew word hu, which is here translated "it," is one of the names used of God. It is so employed in Psalm 102:27: "But thou art the same," or, more literally, "Thou art He." The same expression also occurs in Isaiah 48:12, and is frequently applied by Jewish writers to the eternal and blessed God.

In the Zohar it is applied to God in connection with the bruising of the serpent's head, as expressed in this passage. This agrees well with Jesus, who is the unchangeable, eternal, and omnipotent HE; who is

"The same yesterday, and to day, and for ever";

the true Alpha and Omega, the First and the Last, who is, and who was, and who is to come, the Almighty.

Thirdly, the work which the Seed of the woman was to accomplish deserves particular consideration, and proves that the person spoken of is the Messiah. He was to bruise the serpent's head; that is, He was to destroy Satan and all his works, defeat all his craft and cunning, crush his schemes and designs, and overthrow his whole dominion.

This is frequently spoken of in the Old Testament as the work of the Messiah, and in some passages there appears to be a particular reference to this original prophecy.

Thus, in Psalm 110:6, a psalm which belongs entirely to the Messiah, it is prophesied of Him:

"He shall wound the heads over many countries."

The words may also be rendered, "He shall wound the head," meaning him who is the head or ruler over a great country. This can be no other than Satan, the god and prince of this world, who was to be wounded, bruised, and destroyed by the Messiah.

Again, in Habakkuk 3:13 it is written:

"Thou wentest forth for the salvation of thy people, even for salvation with thine anointed; thou woundedst the head out

of the house of the wicked, by discovering the foundation unto the neck. Selah."

According to Kimchi's reading and interpretation, who applies the passage to the Messiah, it may be expressed in this way:

"As Thou wentest forth for the salvation of Thy people when they entered the land of Canaan, so wilt Thou go forth for the salvation of Thy people by the hand of Messiah, the Son of David, who shall wound Satan, the head, king, and prince of the house of the wicked, and shall overthrow all his strength, power, policy, and dominion."

All this agrees perfectly with Jesus, who has destroyed Satan, gained a complete victory over him, spoiled principalities and powers, and overthrown his dominion.

Fourthly, the sufferings of the Messiah are very fittingly expressed by the serpent bruising His heel.

Some understand the heel to refer to His people upon earth, and the bruising of it to signify the persecutions which Satan and his agents continually raise against them. It appears, however, more properly to refer to Christ's human nature. As the divine nature is the head and chief nature in Christ, so the human nature may be called the heel, being the lower and inferior nature in Him.

This human nature was repeatedly exposed to Satan's assaults, temptations, and persecutions. It was this nature at which Satan particularly struck, and he appeared at last to succeed so far as to bring Christ to a shameful and ignominious death. Then the iniquity of His heels—the sins of His people, which He bore in His own body upon the tree—surrounded Him.

Fifthly, several Jewish writers have understood this passage of the Messiah, particularly the Targums of Jonathan and Jerusalem.

The former, in paraphrasing the words, says that there shall be healing for the heel in the days of the King Messiah. The Jerusalem Targum speaks to much the same purpose.

The Targum of Onkelos also appears well to express the secret, spiteful, malicious, and deceitful manner in which Satan would attack the Messiah at the end of the world, paraphrasing the words in this way:

"He shall remember against thee what thou didst to him of old, and thou shalt watch him at the end."

Later Jewish writers, however, oppose the application of this prophecy to the Messiah, and especially to Jesus. Two objections are chiefly advanced by them.

First, they object that Jesus did not bruise or destroy Satan, but that Satan was rather the cause of the death of Jesus.

To this I reply that Christians do not deny that Satan so far gained his object as to bring about the death of Jesus. Yet we maintain that Jesus, through death, destroyed him who had the power of death, that is, the devil.

By this we do not mean that Satan's being was annihilated, but that he was deprived of his power, his schemes and purposes were confounded, his works were destroyed, and he himself was brought into subjection to Christ, the triumphant Conqueror, who has ascended on high and led captivity captive.

Secondly, they object that Satan still retains power over men, and that the apostle Paul himself acknowledges that Satan hindered him and others from coming to the Thessalonians. They also observe that, in Romans 16:20, the same apostle speaks of Satan as one who was yet to be bruised beneath the feet of the followers of Jesus, and not as one already bruised.

To this I answer that Satan is indeed often permitted by Christ to do many things which disturb and afflict His people. Yet he can go no further than he is allowed, which clearly shows that he has been conquered by Christ and is subject to Him.

Although Satan is not yet fully and finally bruised beneath the feet of the saints, he is already beneath the feet of Jesus, who has spoiled principalities and powers and made an open show of them.

A recent author objects that, although Jesus might be said to bruise the devil's head, or triumph over him, Jesus was nevertheless the only person ever born whose heel the devil could not bruise, or over whom the devil could not triumph by any assault whatever.

But I have already shown in what sense Christ's heel was bruised by the devil, and how Satan and his agents appeared to triumph over Him when they nailed Him to the cross and laid Him securely in the grave.

That triumph, however, did not last long. Though He was crucified through weakness, He lives by the power of God. Though

His heel was bruised, His head could not be. Though He was dead, He is now alive and will live for evermore.

In conclusion, from this first prophecy we learn that the Messiah was to be incarnate, born of a woman and not begotten by man; that He was to suffer and die; and that He was to destroy Satan and his works. All this Jesus has accomplished.

It may also be observed that salvation was proclaimed as soon as sin was committed, and that a prophecy concerning the Messiah was given as soon as there was any need of one.

CHAPTER 2

Showing That the Messiah Was Promised to Abraham, and What Benefits the Nations of the World Were to Receive through Him

The next prophecy concerning the Messiah, or the next discovery made of Him to mankind, was given to Abraham:

> *"And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed."*
>
> —Genesis 22:18

In the former prophecy, it was left undetermined from what people or nation the Messiah should arise. It was declared only in general that He should be the Seed of the woman.

In this prophecy, however, it is plainly revealed that He should come from the seed and posterity of Abraham. This was fulfilled in Jesus, the true Messiah, who

> *"Took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham."*
>
> —Hebrews 2:16

For this reason, He is rightly called the Son of Abraham.

For a clearer understanding of this prophecy, two things must be considered.

I. Who is meant by the seed of Abraham in whom all the nations of the earth were to be blessed.

II. What benefits the nations of the world were to receive through this promised Seed.

First, it will be proper to inquire who is meant by the seed of Abraham in whom all the nations of the earth were to be blessed.

This seed cannot refer to Isaac, the immediate son of Abraham, because the blessing, in the full extent here promised, was never fulfilled in him. Moreover, the promise was afterwards carried forward to his posterity, showing that it did not end in him.

For the same reasons, it cannot refer to Jacob, the immediate son of Isaac. Nor was the prophecy ever fulfilled in the whole body of the nation of Israel, the descendants of Jacob.

What benefits did the nations of the world ever receive from them? When and in what manner were they blessed in them? Or when were the Jews ever the occasion of such a blessing to the nations?

While the Israelites remained in their own land, they dwelt alone and were not reckoned among the nations. They kept themselves at the greatest possible distance from other peoples, because their religion, laws, and customs differed from theirs.

They would have no communion with the nations, either in civil or sacred matters, and little ordinary intercourse with them. They were unwilling even to perform common acts of kindness toward them. Indeed, there existed a real hostility among the Jews toward the Gentiles. The former often considered it no crime to injure the latter, either in their persons or possessions, and their hatred sometimes rose so high that they did all they could to hinder their everlasting salvation. This arose from a mistaken understanding of Deuteronomy 23:6.

Since the destruction of their civil government and their dispersion among the nations, the Gentiles have received no advantage from them. They have not been in any condition to assist them. Therefore, as the nations of the world have never been blessed in the Jewish people, neither is there any likelihood that they ever will be.

So far have the Jews been from being regarded as a blessing among the nations that their name has often been used as a reproach, a proverb, a taunt, and a curse wherever they have been scattered.

It is therefore evident that the nations of the world never adopted such a form of blessing as, "God bless you as He blessed the Israelites," or, "as He blessed the seed of Abraham." A recent author supposes this to be the meaning of the expression in this prophecy, because he believes the phrase is used in this manner elsewhere. In this interpretation he has the support of most modern Jewish writers, whose authority, at other times, he treats with considerable contempt.

Yet no example can be produced in which the nations of the world ever used such a form of blessing. Nor does the use of the expression in other passages require that meaning here, as may be seen from Deuteronomy 29:19, Psalm 72:17, Isaiah 65:16, and Jeremiah 4:2, where there is no proper foundation for such an interpretation.

Furthermore, in parallel passages the verb is used in the passive form, as in Genesis 12:3, Genesis 18:18, and Genesis 28:14. This

directs us to the plain meaning of the words here.

As for Genesis 48:20, the only passage produced in support of the other interpretation, the verb there is plainly active, and therefore provides no evidence that the same expression bears a different sense in this place.

That passage does indeed show what form of blessing would become common among the Jews. But neither that text, nor any other passage, nor any sacred or secular history, informs us that this or any other Jewish form of blessing would be used among the Gentiles.

Since this prophecy was never fulfilled either in Abraham's immediate descendants, such as Isaac or Jacob, or in his more distant descendants, even the whole body of the Jewish nation in any age or period, some other person must be intended. This can be no other than the Messiah, even Jesus, to whom the apostles apply the promise in Acts 3:25–26 and Galatians 3:8.

The meaning of the prophecy is therefore that the Messiah would arise from the seed of Abraham, and that the Gentiles would be blessed in Him.

Although modern Jewish writers have devised other interpretations of this prophecy, the ancient Jewish writers understood it in the sense now given.

Two principal objections are raised by modern Jews against applying the prophecy to the Messiah and in favour of understanding it of the whole body of the Israelites.

They argue that the word seed cannot refer to a single person, but must be understood collectively of a great number.

Yet examples have already been given in the preceding chapter where the word seed refers to one person. The apostle Paul is therefore fully justified when he says:

> *"Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ."*
>
> —Galatians 3:16

They object that no blessing comes to the nations of the world except through the Jews.

To this I answer that it is true that salvation is of the Jews. To

them belonged the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the service of God, and the promises. The fathers were theirs, and from them, according to the flesh, Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever.

From Him the nations of the world receive all their blessings.

But we deny that the Gentiles receive these blessings from the Jewish nation as such. They receive them only through the Messiah, Jesus, who arose from that nation and was made a curse so that the blessing of Abraham might come upon the Gentiles.

Secondly, let us now consider the benefits which the nations of the world were to receive from the Messiah, this promised Seed.

It should be observed that, by all the nations of the world, every individual person within them is not intended, but rather some from all nations who, with Abraham, believe in the same promised Seed. The apostle has taught us to understand the prophecy in this way:

"So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham."

—Galatians 3:9

The Jews consider it a sufficient fulfilment of this prophecy that some among the Gentiles, through the instruction of their patriarchs, were brought to a knowledge of the being, unity, providence, and omnipotence of God, which knowledge they regard as the source of all true blessedness.

But the plain meaning of the prophecy is that, although the Messiah was to arise from the seed of Abraham, the benefits of His coming were not to be confined to Abraham's natural descendants. His divine blessings were to extend to the various nations of the world.

The calling of the Gentiles by the Messiah was the great mystery which, in former ages, was not made known as clearly as it is now under the gospel dispensation. There were, however, frequent intimations of it in the Old Testament, and the Jews could not have been entirely ignorant of it, although nothing was more displeasing and provoking to them.

God long before foretold this temper of theirs by Moses:

"I will move them to jealousy with those which are not a peo-

ple; I will provoke them to anger with a foolish nation."

—Deuteronomy 32:21

That is, He would provoke them by calling and blessing the Gentiles.

Of all the prophets, Isaiah spoke most fully concerning the blessings intended for the Gentiles through the Messiah. The apostle says that Isaiah was very bold in doing so, for he was certain to incur the displeasure of the Jews, and even to place his life in danger.

Near the time of the Messiah's coming, this question was much debated in the schools of Hillel and Shammai: whether, when the Messiah came, the nations of the world would receive any benefit through Him.

The great majority answered in the negative. A few, such as old Simeon and others, understood that He was to be a light to the Gentiles as well as the glory of His people Israel. But most were so far from believing that the Gentiles would be redeemed by the Messiah that they firmly expected them all to be destroyed at His coming, without favour or mercy.

This opinion was strongly opposed by Jesus and His apostles. It is also the true reason why the grace and redemption of Christ are so often expressed in universal terms in the New Testament.

The controversy at that time was not, as it is now between Arminians and Calvinists, whether Christ redeemed every individual of the human race, but whether any of the Gentiles were to be redeemed by Him at all. The Jewish teachers generally answered that question in the negative.

But Jesus and His apostles declared against this opinion. Our Lord, in speaking with one of their learned teachers, said:

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

—John 3:16

By the word world here, Christ means the Gentiles as distinguished from the Jews. This is evident from the words of the apostle John, who leaned upon the bosom of Jesus and must therefore be allowed to be the best interpreter of His words. He says that Jesus Christ is

"The propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world."

—1 John 2:2

By our sins, John means the sins of the Jews, for John himself was a Jew. By the sins of the whole world, he means the sins of the Gentiles also. In this way, he explains the words of Jesus and at the same time opposes the favourite notion of the Jews that the blessings of the Messiah were confined to their own nation.

The apostle Paul uses the word world in the same sense in Romans 11:12 and 15. There was then much the same distinction as there is now. There were Israel and the nations of the world, just as there are now the church and the world. The Jews claimed the former designation for themselves and applied the latter to the Gentiles, whom they regarded as rejected by God.

But Jesus gave Himself a ransom for all, for Gentiles as well as Jews, and the grace of God which brings salvation has appeared to all men. After the resurrection of Jesus, the doctrine of salvation was no longer confined to Judea, but was carried into the Gentile world by its first preachers, who had received a commission from Christ to go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.

By this means, the blessings of the Messiah were conveyed to the Gentiles as well as to the Jews.

This brings us to consider the several benefits which the nations of the earth were to receive from the Messiah, the promised Seed.

Redemption, which is the source and foundation of all the other blessings.

The Messiah is frequently spoken of in the Old Testament under the character of a Redeemer, and the Jews always expected Him as such. Many passages might be produced in proof of this, but I shall mention one in particular because it is cited in the New Testament. The passage is Isaiah 59:20:

"And the Redeemer shall come to Zion, and unto them that turn from transgression in Jacob, saith the Lord."

Aben Ezra says that this Redeemer is the Messiah.

The apostle Paul cites the passage in Romans 11:26 in this form: "There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away

ungodliness from Jacob."

The Jews object to this citation and accuse the apostle of altering the words of the prophet. How justly they do so will appear from considering the principal differences between the two passages.

The prophet says, "The Redeemer shall come to Zion," while the apostle says, "There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer." In reconciling these expressions, it should be observed that the Hebrew prefix sometimes signifies from as well as to, particularly when it is used in place of another preposition. Examples of this may be seen in Exodus 16:1, Exodus 19:1, Numbers 33:38, Ezra 3:8, and 1 Kings 12:24 compared with 2 Chronicles 11:4.

Moreover, the Messiah was indeed to come out of Zion. Thus David says:

"Oh that the salvation of Israel were come out of Zion!"

—Psalm 14:7

The apostle therefore properly expresses the faith and expectation of the ancient Jewish church in his citation.

The other difference is that Isaiah says the Redeemer would come "unto them that turn from transgression in Jacob," while the apostle says that, when He came, He would "turn away ungodliness from Jacob."

Those Jews who object to the apostle's wording would do well to consider that it agrees exactly with the Septuagint translation, whose authors were themselves Jews. The Targum on the passage also supports the apostle's meaning, paraphrasing it in this way:

"The Redeemer shall come to Zion, and shall turn the rebellious ones of the house of Jacob to the law."

It therefore appears that the Jews have no reason to accuse the apostle of falsely citing or altering the words of Isaiah.

The prophecy not only presents the Messiah under the character of a Redeemer, but also reveals the nature of His redemption. It was not to be a deliverance from the Roman yoke, as the Jews vainly expected. This Redeemer was to remove ungodliness from Jacob and to redeem Israel from all her iniquities.

The salvation accomplished by Him was to be an everlasting salvation, not merely a temporary deliverance.

Old Jacob expected this everlasting salvation. While blessing his sons shortly before his death, he broke forth in these words:

"I have waited for thy salvation, O Lord."

—Genesis 49:18

The paraphrase of Jonathan ben Uzziel upon this passage is remarkable. He writes:

"When Jacob saw that Gideon the son of Joash, and Samson the son of Manoah, were appointed to be deliverers, he said, 'I do not wait for the redemption of Gideon, nor for the redemption of Samson, because their redemptions are only temporary; but I wait for Thy redemption, O Lord, because Thy redemption is an everlasting redemption.'"

Some copies read the final clause:

"But I wait for the redemption of Messiah, the Son of David."

The Jerusalem Targum speaks to much the same purpose. From these passages it appears what kind of Redeemer, and what kind of redemption, the ancient Jews expected. They looked for such a Redeemer as Jesus is, whose name was given to Him because He saves His people from their sins, and who has become the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him.

The Gentiles, as well as the Jews, were to share in this salvation and redemption through the Messiah. God gave Him

"For a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of the earth."

—Isaiah 49:6

Accordingly, the gospel has become

"The power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek."

—Romans 1:16

Although salvation is of the Jews, since its Author arose from among them and the gospel was first preached to them, it does not belong to them alone. All the nations of the earth were to be blessed in the Messiah with this great blessing.

The writings of the Old Testament abound with references to the Messiah as Redeemer and to the nature of the redemption He would accomplish. They also plainly set forth the greatness of His person.

They represent Him as the mighty God, as God's equal and fellow, and as the Lord whom the Jews sought. They declare that in a future day it would be said:

> *"Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, and he will save us: this is the Lord; we have waited for him, we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation."*
>
> —Isaiah 25:9

Yet the same Scriptures also speak of Him as man, as a Son born and a Child given, and as One who would be exposed to great sorrow, hardship, suffering, and even death.

It therefore appears that the Jews had no proper reason to accuse Jesus of making Himself God while being a man, especially when His works declared Him to be so. The Messiah foretold by the prophets was to be both God and man.

6. Another blessing with which the nations of the earth were to be blessed in the Messiah, and another benefit they were to receive through Him, is justification from all sin and condemnation.

The apostle appears to have this blessing particularly in view when, citing Genesis 12:3, he says:

> *"And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed."*
>
> —Galatians 3:8

The people of God under the Old Testament understood that no one could be justified before God by a righteousness of his own. They knew and acknowledged their own righteousnesses to be as filthy rags, and therefore prayed that God would not enter into judgment with them, for in His sight no man could be justified by his own works.

One part of the Messiah's work was to bring in everlasting righteousness for the justification of those who believe in Him. For this reason, one of His distinguished names and titles is:

> *"The Lord our righteousness."*
>
> —Jeremiah 23:6

From Him they expected their justifying righteousness:

"Surely, shall one say, in the Lord have I righteousness and strength."

—Isaiah 45:24

According to the Chaldee paraphrase, it is in or through the Word of the Lord, the eternal Logos, that all the seed of Israel shall be justified and shall glory.

This blessing was not to be enjoyed by the Jews alone. The Gentiles were also to share in it. They were not merely to observe this righteousness in others, but to possess and enjoy it themselves; for all the people of the Messiah, whether Jews or Gentiles, were to be righteous.

Indeed, at present the Gentiles have the greater share in this blessing. While Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, did not attain to the law of righteousness,

"The Gentiles, which followed not after righteousness, have attained to righteousness, even the righteousness which is of faith."

—Romans 9:30–31

This righteousness does not arise from themselves, but comes from the Messiah, Jesus, who is

"The end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth."

—Romans 10:4

Through Him they are

"Justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses."

—Acts 13:39

7. Another blessing which the Gentiles, as well as the Jews, were to receive from the Messiah is peace.

Peace, and an abundance of it, was promised for the days of the Messiah. Many prophecies speak of this, including Psalm 72:3 and 7, Isaiah 9:6–7, and Haggai 2:9.

One of the Messiah's titles is the Prince of Peace. Indeed, He is called the Peace, because all true peace comes through Him. He is

both its Author and its Giver, and the Gentiles share in this blessing no less than the Jews.

The Messiah was to

"Speak peace unto the heathen."

—Zechariah 9:10

This Jesus has done by preaching peace to those who were afar off and to those who were near. Those who were near were the Jews, a people brought near to the Lord and living in the land where Jesus and His disciples first began to preach. Those who were afar off were the Gentiles, separated from the covenant privileges of Israel and living at a distance from them.

Jesus preached peace to both, having an equal right to each and a real concern for both, since He is Lord of all.

8. Pardon of sin is another valuable blessing which the nations of the earth, as well as the descendants of Abraham, were to receive from the Messiah.

This is one of the consolations spoken of in Isaiah 40:2, which Kimchi acknowledges belong to the days of the King Messiah. It is also part of the covenant mentioned in Jeremiah 31:34, which was then to be more fully and clearly revealed.

God had promised this blessing, and the ancient Jews expected it on account of the Messiah being

"Wounded for our transgressions"

and

"Bruised for our iniquities."

They have now, however, lost the true understanding of atonement for sin. They no longer expect it through the death of the Messiah, but rather through their own death. In the form of confession used among them by the sick, they express a desire that their death may obtain pardon, remission, and atonement for all their iniquities, transgressions, and sins.

This arises from their ignorance of the true expiation and forgiveness of sin through the death of Christ, who is the propitiation not only for the sins of the Jews, but also for those of the Gentiles.

For

"To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name

whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins."

—Acts 10:43

This precious blessing is obtained through Jesus, whose blood was shed for many for the remission of sins.

9. Submission to the Messiah's laws and government, among the nations of the earth as well as among the Jews, was promised and might therefore be expected in the days of the Messiah.

The apostle Peter appears to make the fulfilment of this prophecy, so far as it concerned the seed of Abraham, chiefly to consist in this. Speaking to the Jews, he says:

"Ye are the children of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying unto Abraham, And in thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed. Unto you first God, having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities."

—Acts 3:25–26

Although the Messiah was first sent to the Jews, first made known among them, and the gospel first preached to them, only some of them were turned to Him. A far greater number among the Gentiles were afterwards brought into subjection to Him, as had been foretold in many prophecies.

When Shiloh came, the gathering of the peoples was to be to Him. When the Root of Jesse was set up as an ensign for the nations, the Gentiles were to seek Him. Even the distant islands were to wait for His law and readily receive it when it was first proclaimed.

All these things have been fulfilled, in greater or lesser measure, since the days of Jesus.

10. A very great outpouring of the Spirit was promised and expected in the days of the Messiah.

This was remarkably fulfilled on the Day of Pentecost, shortly after the ascension of Jesus, in fulfilment of the prophecy of Joel. Many Jewish writers themselves acknowledge that this prophecy belongs to the days of the Messiah.

11. The nations of the earth were also to be blessed with an abundance of knowledge when the Messiah came.

The earth was to be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea. There would no longer be the same need for every man to teach his neighbour and every man his brother, saying, "Know the Lord," for all would know Him, from the least of them to the greatest.

This expectation was so widely known and generally received that the woman of Samaria could say:

> *"I know that Messias cometh, which is called Christ: when he is come, he will tell us all things."*
>
> —John 4:25

This description agrees perfectly with Jesus, who has opened the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, made a full revelation of His Father's mind and will, brought life and immortality to light through the gospel, and spread the savour of His knowledge in every place.

In short, all spiritual blessings in this life, together with everlasting happiness hereafter, were promised to the nations of the world through the Messiah. The gospel of Christ has brought them the joyful news of these blessings, for the salvation of God has been sent to them, and they will hear it.

Since this is so, it is no wonder that the promised Seed of Abraham was so greatly expected, so earnestly prayed for, and so ardently desired. Nor should it seem strange that He was regarded as the delight of the Jewish nation and the desire of all nations.

CHAPTER 3

Concerning the Time of the Messiah's Coming

Having endeavoured to prove that a very early promise of the Messiah was given to our first parents after their apostasy from God, in which He was revealed as the Seed of the woman, and having considered the several benefits which the nations of the earth were to receive from Him as the Seed promised to Abraham, together with the various blessings which might justly be expected at His coming, it will now be proper to inquire into the time when this great Person was to appear in the world.

That there was a fixed and appointed time for the Messiah's coming, which the apostle calls "the fulness of the time," is assured to us by the prophet Habakkuk:

> *"For the vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak, and not lie: though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry."*
>
> —Habakkuk 2:3

The vision, or prophecy, concerns the Messiah, and is therefore called, by way of distinction, the vision. Its fulfilment was exceedingly desirable to the people of God, who were often impatient because it appeared to be so long delayed, and therefore needed fresh assurances to strengthen them in their expectation.

The person spoken of is described by a title which properly belongs to the Messiah. The words may be rendered, "Because He who is to come will come." They are translated in this sense by the Septuagint and are confirmed by the apostle's use of them in Hebrews 10:37.

This description was so commonly applied to the Messiah, and so well understood among the Jews, that when John the Baptist sent his disciples to Jesus to obtain satisfaction concerning His Messiahship, they asked:

> *"Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another?"*
>
> —Matthew 11:3

It would be difficult to apply this title with equal propriety to Cyrus or to any person other than the Messiah.

Moreover, the manner of the Messiah's coming is very

appropriately represented in this passage. The words translated, "It shall speak, and not lie," may also be rendered, "He shall break forth as the morning, and shall not deceive."

In this way, the coming of the Messiah is described in 2 Samuel 23:4. The king Messiah, according to the Targum, who was to arise and rule in the fear of the Lord, would be

> *"As the light of the morning, when the sun riseth, even a morning without clouds."*

This agrees well with Jesus, who is called

> *"The dayspring from on high."*

—Luke 1:78

But if the words are read, "He shall speak, and not lie," they are equally suitable to the Messiah's work and office as a prophet. He was to speak the truth and not deceive, which agrees perfectly with Jesus, who spoke words of truth and wisdom in a manner in which no other man ever spoke.

The very time of the Messiah's coming also appears to be indicated in the prophecy. The expression "at the end he shall speak," or "break forth," may be understood of His appearing at the close of the Jewish economy, when their civil and ecclesiastical state was approaching its dissolution. It is well known that Jesus came at precisely such a time.

Many Jewish writers also acknowledge that this prophecy belongs to the Messiah. They frequently use it to support themselves under the repeated disappointment of their expectation of the Messiah's coming, just as it had been of real comfort to their fathers before the coming of the true Messiah.

The evident purpose of the prophecy is to encourage the righteous to live by faith, continuing in a full and humble expectation of His coming, even though He appeared to delay longer than they first expected or desired. They were not proudly and impatiently to reject the promises of God as though they would never be fulfilled, as appears from the following verse.

When these things are considered, it becomes evident that this prophecy does not refer to Cyrus and the restoration of the Jews from captivity, as a recent author, following Grotius, supposes. It

directs the faith and expectation of the people of God to a far greater Person and to a far greater deliverance.

Now, as there was a fixed, determined, and appointed time for the Messiah's coming, so the prophets of the Old Testament were diligent and earnest in their inquiries concerning it:

> *"Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow."*
>
> —1 Peter 1:11

Their searches were not fruitless, for God was pleased to reveal to several of them the exact and appointed time of His coming.

It is also remarkable that Jesus appeared at the very time fixed by the prophets. At that period there was a general expectation among the Jews that the Messiah was about to come, an expectation which arose from the prophecies that had gone before.

I shall consider this subject in the following order:

1. I shall endeavour to prove that the Messiah was to come before the tribe of Judah, and the rule and government belonging to that tribe, ceased; or, in other words, before the Jewish commonwealth and political state were abolished.

2. I shall show that He was to come before their ecclesiastical or church state ceased; that is, before the destruction of the second temple.

3. I shall consider the exact and appointed time of His coming, as fixed by the seventy weeks of Daniel.

First, I shall endeavour to prove that the Messiah was to come before the tribe of Judah, and the rule and government belonging to that tribe, ceased; or before the Jewish commonwealth and political state were abolished. This I shall attempt to establish from Genesis 49:10:

"The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be."

These words form part of Jacob's prophecy concerning the tribe of Judah and the Messiah who was to arise from it.

Jacob, perceiving that the time of his departure was near, called his sons together and, being under the spirit of prophecy, declared what would happen to their descendants in future ages. It should be observed that what he foretold did not chiefly concern them as individuals, but their tribes and future posterity.

It should also be observed that what he predicted concerning them was to take place in the days of the Messiah. For he said:

> *"Gather yourselves together, that I may tell you that which shall befall you in the last days."*
>
> —Genesis 49:1

That is, in the days of the Messiah. Kimchi says that wherever the expression the last days occurs, the days of the Messiah are to be understood. Many Jewish writers acknowledge that this is its meaning here.

What is foretold particularly concerning the tribe of Judah plainly relates to the Messiah and His times. This may be seen in the statements that his brethren would praise him, that his enemies would be subdued under him, and that his father's children would bow down before him. It is also evident in the comparison of Judah to a lion's whelp.

For this reason, one of the titles given to Jesus is:

> *"The Lion of the tribe of Juda."*
>
> —Revelation 5:5

The time of His coming is plainly predicted in verse 10. In order to explain this, two things must be considered.

Who is meant by Shiloh.

The time of His coming, as fixed in this prophecy

Firstly, I shall first consider who is meant by Shiloh.

The Targums of Onkelos, Jonathan ben Uzziel, and Jerusalem understand Shiloh to refer to the King Messiah. This was certainly the generally received interpretation among the ancient Jews, and many later Jewish writers also acknowledge it.

Some, however, perceiving how strongly this prophecy bears

against them, and how often Christians have used it to prove that the Messiah must already have come, have attempted to apply the words to some other place or person.

Some have understood Shiloh to mean the city of that name; others have applied it to Moses, Saul, David, Jeroboam, Ahijah the Shilonite, or Nebuchadnezzar. These conflicting interpretations reveal the confusion into which they have fallen since departing from the true meaning of the passage. Since these explanations disagree with one another and are inconsistent with the text, they do not require a separate examination.

That the Messiah is intended by Shiloh will appear from two considerations.

First, from the meaning of the word Shiloh.

Secondly, from what is said concerning Him in the text: "Unto him shall the gathering of the people be."

First, that the Messiah is intended by Shiloh may be gathered from the meaning of the word. Although learned men, both Jewish and Christian, differ concerning its derivation and precise sense, every principal interpretation given to it agrees well with the Messiah.

Kimchi says that it signifies "his son," and that the words should therefore be rendered, "Until his son comes"; that is, the son of Judah. Who can more reasonably be intended than Judah's renowned Son, the Prince Messiah, who was to arise from that tribe, as the Messiah Jesus plainly did?

The feminine suffix attached to the word has also led some to observe, not without reason, that this Son of Judah was to be the Seed of the woman, born of a virgin.

Others, including Onkelos and Jarchi, explain the word as meaning "whose it is," and render the phrase, "Until He comes whose the kingdom is." They rightly understand this of the Messiah, for the kingdom belongs to Him by right and has been given to Him.

This agrees with Ezekiel 21:27:

> *"I will overturn, overturn, overturn it: and it shall be no more, until he come whose right it is."*

Rabbi Abendana applies this passage to the Messiah, as it properly should be.

Others have understood the word to be compounded of terms

signifying "to whom gifts belong," or "to whom gifts shall be brought." Jarchi cites the Midrash Agadah in support of this interpretation.

This also agrees with the Messiah, of whom it was prophesied that presents should be brought and gifts given to Him, as in Psalm 72:10 and 15. This received a literal fulfilment in Jesus, to whom the wise men presented gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

Most learned men, however, derive the word from a root which signifies to be quiet, peaceable, and prosperous. In that sense, Shiloh denotes One who possesses these qualities.

This description agrees well with the Messiah, who was to be of a meek and peaceable disposition. His voice was not to be heard in the streets. He was to be the Man of peace, the Author and Giver of all peace, and the One in whose hand all things would prosper.

The pleasure of the Lord was to prosper in His hand, as it did in Jesus, who obtained a complete victory over all His enemies and procured eternal salvation for His people.

From the whole, it appears that the variety of interpretations given to the word does not weaken the application of this prophecy to the Messiah, as the author of The Scheme of Literal Prophecy asserts.

Secondly, that the Messiah is intended may also be concluded from what is said of Shiloh in the text:

"And unto him shall the gathering of the people be."

This can properly agree with no other than the Messiah, to whom the Gentiles would seek and in whom they would trust. Whatever rendering is given to the words, they remain suitable to Him.

Some render the expression "the obedience of the peoples," in agreement with the use of the word in Proverbs 30:17. This is true of the Messiah, whose people are a willing people, ready to serve and obey Him in the day of His power.

The Gentiles have, in a remarkable manner, rendered Him a willing and cheerful obedience, and have fulfilled the prophecy:

> *"Behold, thou shalt call a nation that thou knowest not, and nations that knew not thee shall run unto thee."*
>
> —Isaiah 55:5

That is, they would run to Him who was promised as a Leader and Commander of the people, whom Kimchi understands to be the

Messiah.

The Septuagint renders the words, "the expectation of the nations." The Messiah was indeed the expectation not only of the Jews, but also of the nations. The distant islands waited for Him, and He was the Desire of all nations.

If, however, the words are read according to Jarchi, "Unto him shall the gathering of the people be," as in our translation, they are equally applicable to the Messiah. The people, and especially the Gentiles, were to be gathered to Him.

No sooner had Jesus entered upon His public ministry than multitudes flocked to Him and attended His teaching. When His gospel was afterwards published among the Gentiles, great numbers received it and continued steadfastly in it.

Through the preaching of the gospel, a great gathering of people to Christ has taken place in every age since. Before Him all nations will also be gathered at the day of judgment, when He will separate them one from another as a shepherd divides the sheep from the goats.

Secondly, I shall now consider the time of Shiloh's, or the Messiah's, coming according to this prophecy. He was to come before the sceptre and the lawgiver departed from Judah.

The Hebrew word translated sceptre frequently signifies a tribe, and it is used in that sense elsewhere in this chapter. It may therefore be understood in that way here. The meaning would then be that the tribe of Judah would not be scattered and lost, as the other tribes of Israel were, but would remain a distinct tribe until the coming of the Messiah.

The word may also properly be rendered sceptre. Since a sceptre is an emblem of government, it may express the rule and authority which were to continue in the tribe of Judah until Shiloh came.

The Jewish writers themselves acknowledge that rule and government are intended. These two senses of the word may easily be joined together, for there can be no rule or government where there is no tribe or body of people gathered in an orderly state, just as such a body cannot long continue without some form of rule and government.

The meaning of the prophecy is therefore that the tribe of Judah,

together with rule and government within it, would continue until the Messiah came; or, in other words, that the Messiah would come before Judah ceased to exist as a distinct tribe and before its rule and government were removed.

It is certain that Judah continued as a distinct tribe until the coming of Jesus the Messiah.

From the time of Jacob's blessing, Judah and his descendants became a distinct tribe, as did the other sons of Jacob and their descendants. In this chapter we have the first account of the tribes of Israel and of Jacob's family being arranged in this form.

From that time onward, Judah and the other tribes continued distinct until the northern tribes were carried captive into Assyria, where they were scattered and lost and never returned as tribes.

Yet Judah, though carried captive into Babylon, was preserved as a distinct tribe. It returned from captivity in that condition and continued so until the days of Jesus.

This preservation was evidently ordered for the fulfilment of the prophecy.

As long as Judah remained a distinct tribe, rule and government continued within it. The tribe and its government began together and ended together. The character of Judah's rule may be understood by considering the government which existed in the other tribes.

Judah's rule was of the same nature as theirs, except that it was to continue longer. Its sceptre was of the same kind as theirs, but it was not to depart when theirs did. In this respect lay the superior distinction of Judah's blessing.

Scripture plainly shows that every tribe had its own heads, princes, and rulers. We find an account of this very early, even before the children of Israel came out of Egypt, when the heads of their fathers' houses are mentioned. Elsewhere these are called the heads of the tribes.

Since this form of government existed so early, it is highly probable that it was settled by Jacob shortly before his death, at the same time that the distinct tribes were formally established.

It is also evident that the rule or government represented by the sceptre was already in the possession of Judah when this prophecy was given. The words are:

CHAPTER 3

"The sceptre shall not depart from Judah."

There would be no proper sense in saying that something should not depart from Judah if it had never yet been placed in his possession.

This form of government existed before the time of Moses, and Moses made no alteration to it. Although he was the legislator who delivered to Israel, from God, the most excellent system of laws and government ever enjoyed by any people, he left the tribal order as he found it.

The same may be said of Joshua, his successor. This arrangement continued during the period of the Judges. Even when all the tribes of Israel were united under one head and the kingly government was established, the tribal order was not abolished.

It continued in all the tribes for as long as they remained distinct. Since the tribe of Judah continued longer than the others, this form of rule remained with it also.

Even during the Babylonian captivity, Judah was preserved under those whom the Jews call the heads of the captivity. These rulers returned with the people into their own land and marched at their head.

Nor was this authority abolished during the reign of the Hasmonaeans, although they belonged to the tribe of Levi. During their government, the Sanhedrin, which was the highest court of judgment, consisted chiefly of men from the tribe of Judah.

Only Judah, together with the small tribe of Benjamin which had become joined with it, had returned from Babylon. In particular, the Nasi, or prince of the assembly, was always from the tribe of Judah, even down to the days of Jesus.

The elders and rulers of the people are frequently mentioned in the New Testament, and there is therefore no need to produce particular examples.

Soon after that time, however, the tribe of Judah ceased to exist as a distinct tribe, and with it all rule and authority were brought to an end. When the tribe ceased, its government necessarily ceased also.

The Jews are no longer a political body possessing rule and government among themselves. For many centuries they have been

subject to the laws and governments of the nations among whom they are scattered.

The sceptre has therefore entirely departed from Judah. The conclusion which may fairly be drawn is that the Messiah must already have come.

It appears from what has been said that there is no need to understand the sceptre as referring specifically to kingly power and authority, since a sceptre is not always used as an emblem of royal dominion.

Those who interpret it in this sense are unable to defend the prophecy properly against the Jews. The kingly power in the tribe of Judah did not begin until the time of David, more than six hundred years after the prophecy was given, and it ceased with Zedekiah, more than five hundred years before the birth of Jesus.

But the form of government exercised by the heads and princes of the tribe began when the tribe itself began and continued without interruption for as long as the tribe remained.

If, therefore, any particular form of government is intended by the sceptre, this interpretation has the strongest claim.

Yet it may be that rule and authority in general are meant, without reference to any single form of government. In that case, the prophecy teaches that Judah would continue as a political body, governed by its own laws, until the coming of the Messiah.

Understood in this way, the prophecy has been fulfilled. From the time the tribe of Judah first existed, it remained under some form of government, whether monarchical, aristocratic, or democratic.

Even during the Babylonian captivity, it continued as a political body governed by its own laws. The same was true when Herod, an Idumaean, occupied the throne. The sceptre had not yet departed from Judah.

But now there is no appearance of any form of government among the Jews, nor has there been for many centuries. Indeed, how could such a government exist when the tribe itself no longer remains as a distinct body?

There is one further matter to be considered: what is meant by the lawgiver from between Judah's feet, who was not to be removed until the Messiah came.

By a lawgiver, we are not to understand a person, or group of persons, possessing authority to make and prescribe laws. The tribe of Judah had no power to make laws either for itself or for the other tribes, but was subject to those unalterable laws which were delivered through Moses.

Some Jewish writers understand the word to mean any ruler or governor who possesses authority and jurisdiction over others. The word is used in this sense in Judges 5:14, and if so, it expresses much the same thing as the word sceptre.

Others, including the three Targums on this passage, understand it of the scribes and teachers of the law. There were many such men among the Jews in the days of Jesus, so that the lawgiver had not then been removed from between Judah's feet.

But now the tribe is extinct and its genealogies are entirely lost. Although the Jews still claim to have teachers of the law among them, they cannot prove that these men belong to the tribe of Judah.

The Messiah was therefore to come while Judah remained in such a condition that it could still be seen to possess rule and authority within itself, together with proper persons to administer and explain its laws.

This condition no longer exists, nor has it existed for many centuries. It follows that the Messiah must already have come.

Let the Jews therefore show what person appeared before the sceptre and the lawgiver departed from Judah, and in whom the marks and characteristics of the Messiah agree so fully as they do in Jesus.

The Jews have attempted in several ways to weaken this testimony that the Messiah has already come. Menasseh ben Israel has collected no fewer than eleven different interpretations of the passage, all intended to defeat the argument which Christians draw from it, but without success.

They would have the word translated sceptre rendered instead as a rod or staff. Sometimes they understand it as a rod of correction, and at other times as a staff of support. They say that neither of these would be lacking from the tribe of Judah until the Messiah came.

But it may reasonably be asked what particular affliction befell the tribe of Judah which did not also befall the other tribes of Israel.

Besides, Judah enjoyed a flourishing condition for five hundred years under the reign of David's family. When the other tribes were carried away captive and never returned, Judah was preserved as a distinct tribe.

It is true that, since the rejection of Jesus as the Messiah, the rod of correction has remained upon them and will continue until God grants them repentance.

As for a staff of support, what support have they enjoyed while living for so many centuries outside their own land, deprived of the privileges they once possessed there, and dwelling among the nations in disgrace, poverty, and distress?

Again, at one time they will have Shiloh mean anyone except the Messiah, while at another time they are compelled to acknowledge that the Messiah is intended. This reveals the ignorance and confusion of even their greatest teachers.

The story told by Benjamin of Tudela, concerning a certain Jew of the house of David who exercised jurisdiction over a thousand Jews at Baghdad in Persia, is not worthy of credit, since it has never been properly confirmed.

Even if it were true, how would it prove that the sceptre still remains in the tribe of Judah, or that the lawgiver has not yet departed from between his feet?

From the whole it appears that the tribe of Judah no longer exists as a distinct tribe, but has lost every form of rule and authority. The Jews are no longer a political body possessing government and dominion within themselves.

The sceptre has therefore departed from Judah, and consequently the Messiah must already have come.

The Jews themselves have been compelled to acknowledge the true condition of their people. Particularly remarkable is the saying of Rabbi Rachmon, recorded in the Talmud:

> *"Woe unto us, for the sceptre has departed from Judah, and the Son of David has not yet come."*

Jesus, however, did come before the sceptre and the lawgiver departed from Judah, and before the Jews ceased to be a nation and a political body governed by their own laws.

Since He also possesses all the marks and characteristics of the

true Messiah, He ought therefore to be received as such.

II. I shall now show that the Messiah was to come before the Jewish church state ceased, or before the destruction of the second temple. This may be proved from Haggai 2:6–9:

"For thus saith the Lord of hosts; Yet once, it is a little while, and I will shake the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land;

"And I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come: and I will fill this house with glory, saith the Lord of hosts.

"The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, saith the Lord of hosts.

"The glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former, saith the Lord of hosts: and in this place will I give peace, saith the Lord of hosts."

From these words I shall endeavour to prove four things.

First, that by this house in the prophecy the second temple must be understood.

Secondly, that the Messiah, who is here described as the Desire of all nations, was to come into this temple, and that Jesus accordingly did so.

Thirdly, that the coming of the Messiah into this temple was the greater glory promised to it.

Fourthly, that several circumstances in the passage point out not only the Person who was to come, but also the time of His coming.

First, I shall endeavour to prove that the house spoken of is the second temple.

This is so plain that it might seem impossible for anyone to deny it. The temple built by Solomon had been burned by the Chaldeans and entirely destroyed. The Jews had now returned from Babylon with permission from Cyrus to rebuild it, and they had begun the work under the leadership of Zerubbabel, Joshua, and others.

The clear purpose of the prophet, both in this chapter and the preceding one, was to encourage them in the rebuilding, notwithstanding the poor appearance which this temple was likely to make in comparison with Solomon's.

Several Jewish writers acknowledge that the second temple is

intended. Others, however, perceiving how strongly the argument proves that the Messiah must already have come, would understand the prophecy of a third temple which they imagine will be built in the days of the Messiah.

But that the second temple, and not a future third temple, is intended, is evident from the following considerations.

That the second temple, and not a third, is intended is evident from the following considerations.

1. The pronoun this plainly points to the house which was then being built, to the exclusion of every other:

"I will fill this house with glory."

The meaning is: this house, this very house which you have begun to build, and which appears so mean and contemptible in your eyes when compared with the former temple—even this house will I fill with glory.

2. In verse 9 it is expressly called:

"This latter house."

This distinguishes it from the former house built by Solomon. If Solomon's temple was the first house, then this must necessarily be the second. Bishop Kidder has produced examples from Exodus 4:8–9 and Deuteronomy 24:3 in which the word translated latter must signify the second.

3. The purpose of the prophecy was to encourage those who were then building, and this confines its meaning to the second temple.

Cyrus had given the Jews permission to return to their own land and rebuild the temple. They began the work, but when difficulties arose, they abandoned it and turned instead to improving their own houses. They wrongly supposed that the time had not yet come for the Lord's house to be built, as appears from Haggai 1:2.

The prophet therefore reproved them, exhorted them to resume the work, and showed them that the calamities which had come upon them were the result of their neglect. By this means the princes and the people were stirred up and encouraged to begin the work again.

Yet when some of the older men, who had seen Solomon's temple, observed how far this building fell short of it, they wept. The Lord therefore encouraged the builders through the prophet, assuring them that, notwithstanding the humble appearance of this structure, it would be filled with a glory surpassing that of the former temple.

Had a third temple been intended, what encouragement would this have given them? To be told that the house they were then building would soon be pulled down and replaced by another, far more magnificent, would not have encouraged them to continue with diligence. It would rather have made them careless, inactive, and indifferent toward the work before them.

4. The expression, "Yet once, it is a little while," cannot possibly agree with a third temple.

More than two thousand years have passed since this prophecy was given, and no third temple has been built, nor is there any present likelihood of such a temple appearing. Such a period cannot reasonably be called a little while.

The objection raised against applying these words to the days of Jesus will be considered later.

Since, therefore, the second temple is intended by this latter house, I shall proceed, secondly, to prove that the Messiah—described here as the Desire of all nations—was to come into this temple, and that Jesus accordingly did so.

Secondly, I shall endeavour to prove that the Messiah, who is here described as the Desire of all nations, was to come into this temple, and that Jesus accordingly did so.

It may first be expected that I should prove that the Messiah is intended by the expression, "the Desire of all nations."

Jarchi, Kimchi, and Aben Ezra understand it to mean the desirable things of the nations, such as gold, silver, and precious stones, which they would bring into the temple and offer as gifts.

But this interpretation is contrary to the grammatical construction of the words, foreign to the context, and far too insignificant to correspond with those remarkable displays of divine power—the shaking of the heavens, the earth, the sea, the dry land, and all nations—which were to precede this coming.

Rabbi Akiba applied the prophecy to the Messiah, and the title given here agrees perfectly with Him. All the nations of the earth were to receive great blessings and considerable advantages through Him, as has already been proved. He must therefore be a most desirable Person.

Moreover, the great commotion of the heavens, the earth, the sea, the dry land, and all the nations mentioned in the prophecy can properly agree with no other event than the coming of the Messiah and the circumstances attending it.

Nothing except the appearing of the Messiah in this temple could make it more excellent and glorious than the temple built by Solomon.

It is therefore certain that the Messiah was to come into this temple:

"And the desire of all nations shall come."

But where was He to come? He was to come to His temple. This is made clear by the words which follow:

"And I will fill this house with glory."

The same truth appears in the parallel prophecy of Malachi:

"Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple: even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in: behold, he shall come, saith the Lord of hosts."

—Malachi 3:1

Rabbi David Kimchi understands this prophecy to refer to the Messiah. That the Messiah is intended may readily be concluded from the magnificent titles given to Him: the Lord and the Messenger of the covenant. These titles cannot properly agree with any other person.

The same Person is intended in both Haggai and Malachi. In Haggai He is called the Desire of all nations; in Malachi, the Lord whom the Jews sought and the Messenger of the covenant in whom they delighted.

The one prophet declares that He would come within a little while; the other says that He would come suddenly to His temple. This temple is the same as Haggai's latter house, for He could not

have come suddenly into any other.

Nothing is more evident than that Jesus came into this temple.

The Jews expected to meet the Messiah there. For this reason, aged Simeon and Anna the prophetess waited in the temple for Him. Simeon met the child Jesus there when He was presented before the Lord.

At twelve years of age, Jesus disputed there with the teachers. After entering upon His public ministry, He taught the people in the temple, and did so daily. There He performed many of His miracles.

There also He was acknowledged as the Messiah, even by the children, who cried in the temple:

"Hosanna to the Son of David."

As the Lord and rightful Owner of the temple, He cast out the buyers, sellers, and others who profaned it.

—Matthew 21:12–14

It is no objection to applying these prophecies to Jesus that the temple into which He came had been rebuilt by Herod. The temple built by the Jews after their return from Babylon, later restored and enlarged by Herod, and finally destroyed by Vespasian, was regarded as one and the same temple. The Jews themselves consistently called it the second house.

Besides, if Herod's temple were considered distinct from Zerubbabel's and therefore counted as a third temple, then the temple which the Jews still expect would have to be called the fourth rather than the third.

Nor is there any weight in the Jewish objection that Jesus came into this temple only toward the end of its existence. It is sufficient that He came into it at all; indeed, the objection itself acknowledges that He did so.

Thirdly, I shall show that the Messiah's coming into this temple was the greater glory promised to it:

"I will fill this house with glory."

"The glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former."

The former house, built by Solomon, was exceedingly great,

glorious, and magnificent. This is evident from the vast treasure gathered by David and expended by Solomon, the great number of workmen employed, the enormous provision required for them, and the grandeur and richness of the building itself, the like of which had never been seen in the world.

God Himself had drawn its model and pattern and given it to David in writing. Its dedication by Solomon was also magnificent. Above all, the glory of the Lord filled it and continued within it.

The glory of the latter house must therefore have been something very considerable, since it made that house not merely equal to Solomon's temple, but superior to it.

The Jews themselves acknowledge that several things present in the former temple were absent from the latter. They particularly mention five: the ark, the Urim and Thummim, the fire from heaven, the Shechinah, and the Holy Ghost.

Moreover, when the foundation of the second temple was laid, several of the older men who had seen the glory of the former house wept, because this new building appeared in comparison with it as nothing.

There must therefore have been some extraordinary glory belonging to the latter house which caused it to surpass the former.

Some Jewish writers maintain that the greater glory of the second temple consisted in its longer duration. They say that the first temple stood for four hundred and ten years, while the second stood for four hundred and twenty, and therefore continued ten years longer.

But they offer no sufficient proof of this calculation. Even if it were true, and even if the builders had known it beforehand, what great encouragement could such a fact have given them to continue their work?

How could the temple's standing a few years longer compensate for the absence of the ark, the Urim and Thummim, the fire from heaven, the Shechinah, and the Holy Ghost? How could this make it equal, much less superior, to the glorious temple built by Solomon?

Nor can it reasonably be imagined that such an extraordinary shaking of the heavens, the earth, and the sea would take place merely to introduce so small a glory as this.

Others therefore argue that the glory of the second temple

increased through the riches brought into it by the Gentiles during the time of the Hasmonaeans. They also say that, when the temple was rebuilt by Herod, it surpassed even Solomon's temple in magnificence.

But it is not credible that either the Jews, who had only recently returned from captivity and were both poor and few, or Herod, who was tributary to the Roman Empire, could have raised a structure exceeding Solomon's in splendour.

Their account rests chiefly upon the authority of Joseph ben Gorion, who wrote much later than the true Josephus.

As for the riches brought into the temple by the Gentiles during the time of the Hasmonaeans, these were far too insignificant to equal, much less surpass, the glory of Solomon's temple.

Besides, silver and gold are expressly excluded from being the glory intended in the prophecy:

> *"The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, saith the Lord of hosts."*
>
> —Haggai 2:8

The meaning is this: Silver and gold, which so greatly adorned the first house, and the absence of which makes this house appear poor and contemptible in your eyes, are entirely at My command. I possess an unquestionable right to them, and, if it were My will, I could easily gather vast treasures to enrich and adorn this house.

But I have in view a greater glory than silver or gold, which I intend to bring into it:

> *"The glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former."*
>
> —Haggai 2:9

Rabbi Azarias would have the Desire of all nations and the surpassing glory of this latter house refer to the coming of Alexander the Great to Jerusalem with his princes. Alexander honoured the temple with his presence and granted peace to the Jewish nation while the surrounding nations were in turmoil.

But surely the coming of Alexander could not give this house a greater glory than that possessed by the first temple, which was built and dedicated by Solomon, a far greater prince than Alexander.

Nevertheless, this interpretation grants us one useful point: that the expression "the Desire of all nations" refers to a person, or persons, and not merely to desirable things. I have already proved that the Person intended is the Messiah.

Since none of the things mentioned could give the latter house a greater glory than the former, and since nothing in the text or context points to any other surpassing glory than the coming of the Desire of all nations into it, it may safely be concluded that the prophecy refers to the appearance of the Messiah in His temple.

His presence made the second temple far more glorious than the first, for the glory of God which appeared only in shadow in the former house appeared bodily in the latter.

Fourthly, I shall consider several circumstances in the passage which point out both the Person who was to come and the time of His coming.

The first is the great shaking which was to precede His appearance:

"For thus saith the Lord of hosts; Yet once, it is a little while, and I will shake the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land;

"And I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come."

—Haggai 2:6–7

These words describe the great changes and disturbances which took place in the world before the coming of Christ. Kingdoms and empires were shaken, overturned, and succeeded by others. The Persian monarchy was overthrown by the Greeks, and the Grecian Empire was afterwards subdued by the Romans.

The nations were also greatly disturbed by wars, conquests, and changes of government. By these events divine providence prepared the way for the coming of the Messiah and for the spread of His gospel among the nations.

The expression may also include the alterations made in the Jewish state. Their civil and ecclesiastical order was greatly shaken. Their rulers were changed, their independence was weakened, and they became subject first to one foreign power and then to another.

All these commotions were signs that the appointed time was drawing near.

The apostle applies these words to the removal of things which

could be shaken, so that those things which cannot be shaken might remain:

"Whose voice then shook the earth: but now he hath promised, saying, Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven.

"And this word, Yet once more, signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain."

—Hebrews 12:26–27

The Mosaic economy, with its ceremonial worship and earthly sanctuary, was to be removed. In its place, the unshaken kingdom of the Messiah was to be established—a kingdom which cannot be moved and which will continue for ever.

The shaking of all nations may also refer to the powerful effects produced among them by the preaching of the gospel. The apostles went into the Gentile world proclaiming Jesus as the Messiah, and their doctrine disturbed the established religions, customs, and idolatries of the nations.

This preaching turned the world upside down, overthrew the worship of false gods, and gathered multitudes from among the Gentiles into the kingdom of Christ.

Thus the shaking foretold by the prophet properly agrees with the period of the Messiah's coming and with the great changes which followed it.

Thirdly, the Lord promises that peace would be given in this place at the time of the Messiah's coming:

"And in this place will I give peace, saith the Lord of hosts."

—Haggai 2:9

This promise was fulfilled when God gave the Messiah Jesus, who is Himself our peace. He made peace through the blood of His cross and sent His ministers throughout the nations of the earth, preaching peace by Jesus Christ, who is Lord of all.

Some have also maintained that there was a universal peace throughout the world during the reign of Augustus, after the many disturbances and revolutions among the nations. It was during his reign that Jesus was born.

If this account is true, the prophecy also received a temporal

fulfilment. If no such peace existed at that time, it would be difficult to identify any comparable period of peace during the continuance of the second temple.

From all that has been said, it appears that the Messiah was to come before the second temple was destroyed. Consequently, He must have come many centuries ago.

It is certain that Jesus came while that temple was still standing, attended by all the marks and characteristics of the Messiah.

The Jews are greatly perplexed by this argument. They have therefore been compelled to acknowledge that the Messiah was born before the destruction of the second temple. Yet they absurdly claim that He remains hidden—whether at Rome, in the sea, or in paradise.

Such explanations reveal the miserable ignorance, obstinacy, and judicial blindness which have overtaken that people.

Rabbi Josse, who witnessed the destruction of the temple by Titus, declared:

"The time of the Messiah is come."

From the prophecy before us, he had good reason to draw that conclusion, as every Jew ought to do.

III. The next matter to be considered is the exact and precise time of the Messiah's coming and His being cut off, as fixed by Daniel's seventy weeks. The prophecy is recorded at length in Daniel 9:24–27:

"Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy.

> *"Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times.*

"And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined.

"And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate."

The occasion of this prophecy is plainly this. Daniel was then in captivity and understood from the sacred writings, particularly from the prophecy of Jeremiah, that the captivity would continue for seventy years.

He therefore became deeply concerned for the Jewish people, the city of Jerusalem, and the holy temple. On their account, he set apart time for fasting and prayer before God.

His prayers were quickly heard, for he was a man greatly beloved. At the beginning of his supplications, the commandment went forth, orders were given, and the angel Gabriel was immediately sent to give him an account of those matters about which he was so deeply concerned.

The things Gabriel was commissioned to explain were of the greatest importance. A royal decree would be issued in favour of the Jews, by which they would receive full liberty to rebuild Jerusalem, together with its streets and walls, although the work would be attended by great trouble and opposition.

After the appointed period specified in the prophecy had passed, the Messiah the Prince, whom Daniel and the Jewish nation expected, would be cut off. Soon after the cutting off of this great Person, the Jewish nation, city, and temple would be utterly ruined and destroyed.

Because the matters Gabriel was about to reveal were so important, he introduced them by saying:

"Therefore understand the matter, and consider the vision."

—Daniel 9:23

Daniel was thus called to give the closest attention to what was about to be revealed.

In order that we may better understand the prophecy, two things must be considered:

1. What kind of weeks are intended, which are said to be determined

upon Daniel's people and his holy city, and what is meant by their being so determined.

2. The several events which were to be fulfilled within these weeks, or shortly after their expiration, and how they received an actual and exact fulfilment.

First, I shall consider what kind of weeks are intended and in what sense they were determined upon the Jewish people and their holy city, Jerusalem.

By weeks we must understand either weeks of days or weeks of years. They cannot be weeks of days, for that period would be far too short for the many events specified in the prophecy to be fulfilled.

Seventy ordinary weeks amount to less than a year and a half. Yet within such a period none of the things foretold by the angel came to pass. Jerusalem, with its streets and walls, was not rebuilt in seven ordinary weeks. Nor, according to any interpretation, was the Messiah cut off after sixty-nine weeks of days. Neither were the Jewish nation, city, and temple entirely destroyed at the end of seventy such weeks.

We must therefore understand them as weeks of years. On this point there is no dispute between us and the Jewish writers, nor with the author of The Scheme of Literal Prophecy, for they readily acknowledge it.

This manner of speaking has been used by Greek and Latin authors. Yet even if it had not, its frequent use among the Jews would be sufficient to justify that meaning here.

Thus Laban said to Jacob concerning Rachel:

"Fulfil her week, and we will give thee this also for the service which thou shalt serve with me yet seven other years."

—Genesis 29:27

The meaning was that Jacob should complete seven years of service for Rachel, which he accordingly did.

The Jews also reckoned their jubilees by sabbaths, or weeks of years:

"And thou shalt number seven sabbaths of years unto thee, seven times seven years."

—Leviticus 25:8

It was also customary among the prophets to put a day for a year, as appears in Ezekiel:

"I have appointed thee each day for a year."

—Ezekiel 4:6

The apostle John followed the same prophetic manner of calculation in the Revelation.

That Daniel intended weeks of years appears still more clearly from the language he uses elsewhere. When speaking of his mourning and fasting for twenty-one ordinary days, he describes the period not simply as three weeks, but as three weeks of days:

"In those days I Daniel was mourning three full weeks."

—Daniel 10:2

This expression appears designed to distinguish those ordinary weeks of days from the prophetic weeks used in the present vision and to prevent any misunderstanding.

By the seventy weeks, therefore, we are to understand four hundred and ninety years. This was the period appointed for the fulfilment of the events revealed in the prophecy.

These weeks are said to be determined upon Daniel's people and his holy city.

By Daniel's people, we must understand the Jews, who were his countrymen, of the same nation and religion, and for whom he possessed a deep and affectionate concern.

By his holy city is meant Jerusalem, the chief city of Judea, where the temple had formerly stood and the pure worship of God had been maintained. Daniel was also deeply concerned for its restoration.

When seventy weeks, or four hundred and ninety years, are said to be determined upon them, the meaning is that this period was fixed and appointed for the accomplishment of the several events mentioned in the prophecy concerning the Jewish people and their city.

The singular verb joined with the plural noun may also indicate that every week within the whole number was particularly fixed and allotted to one event or another, each of which would receive its full and exact accomplishment.

The word translated determined is rendered by the Vulgate as shortened or abbreviated. Roman Catholic interpreters have closely followed this translation, and the author of The Scheme of Literal Prophecy also appears to support it.

The Septuagint, however, renders the word as cut or divided, not as shortened.

Tertullian is also cited as translating it in this manner, but his authority in this matter cannot carry much weight, since he was entirely unacquainted with the Hebrew language.

It is surprising that the author should assert that the original word, both in Hebrew and Chaldee, signifies only to abbreviate or cut and not to determine. This is contrary to the judgment of Jewish writers, who must surely be allowed to understand their own language. They explain it as meaning to decree, determine, or decide a matter.

That the word signifies to cut is not denied. What must be denied is that it cannot also signify to determine, for it is used in that sense.

Lively, whose chronology has been appealed to, was far from accepting the Vulgate translation. He explains that the word properly signifies to cut, but that it is used here for determining and decreeing because, in forming a judgment, the mind distinguishes truth from falsehood and good from evil, and thus, as it were, cuts out or appoints what is proper.

He illustrates this from the Chaldee paraphrase of Esther, where Daniel is called Hathach because, by the word of his mouth, matters belonging to the kingdom were cut out—that is, determined and appointed.

Similar uses may be found elsewhere, and Latin authors employ corresponding words in the same sense. Theodoret likewise understood the Greek expression to mean that the weeks were appointed and decreed.

The appeal to Lively therefore gives no support to the interpretation being defended.

It is still more remarkable that passages from the New Testament should be produced to establish the meaning of a Hebrew word which occurs nowhere else in Scripture, nor does any word derived from it.

The probable purpose of insisting upon the translation shortened

is to support the view that the seven weeks and the sixty-two weeks began at the same point, which some place in the fourth year of Jehoiakim.

There is no need, however, to continue this dispute. The word may properly be retained in its original and primary sense of cut. This very suitably describes the division of the seventy weeks into the distinct periods of seven weeks, sixty-two weeks, and one week, within which different events were to be accomplished.

Secondly, I shall consider the several events which were to be fulfilled within these weeks, or shortly after their conclusion, and show how they received their actual and exact accomplishment.

Secondly, I proceed to consider the several events which were to be fulfilled within these weeks, or shortly after their expiration, and to show how they received their actual and exact accomplishment.

These events are delivered, first, more generally in verse 24. By this I mean that the angel gives an account of several things which are not assigned to any particular division of the seventy weeks. They are declared generally as events to be fulfilled within the whole period of seventy weeks, or four hundred and ninety years.

Upon examination, we shall find that they were fulfilled in or by Messiah the Prince, at or about the time when He was cut off. They principally concern the work which He was to accomplish.

1. He was to finish the transgression.

The Hebrew word may signify to restrain, as well as to shut up or finish. Dr Prideaux observes that the former meaning is more suitable here, and it is difficult to produce a clear instance in which the word is used in the latter sense.

The meaning therefore is not that all punishment for the sins of the Jewish people would then be brought to an end. Nothing is more evident than that the measure of their punishment had not yet been completed.

Rather, the prophecy means that, when the Messiah came, a restraint would be laid upon the prevailing power of transgression.

It is well known that sin greatly abounded when Jesus appeared, both among the Jewish nation and throughout the Gentile world. Perhaps it had never prevailed to such an extent since it first entered

the world. The Jews themselves regarded the extraordinary increase of wickedness as one of the signs of the Messiah's approach.

Yet there has never been an age in which greater restraints were laid upon sin than in that period. This work began through the ministry of John the Baptist and Jesus Christ in the land of Judea and was afterwards extended through the apostles into the Gentile world.

Through the preaching of repentance, righteousness, and the gospel of Christ, multitudes were turned from their sins, and the prevailing course of wickedness received a powerful restraint.

2. Another work which the Messiah was to accomplish at His coming was to make an end of sins.

Our translators here follow the Keri, or marginal reading, rather than the Cetib, or written text, which reads, "to seal up sins." Either reading fully expresses the work of the Messiah.

Things which are sealed are hidden and covered. In this sense, sin is said to be covered when it is forgiven:

"Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered."

—Psalm 32:1

When the Messiah is said to seal up sins, the meaning is that He would obtain their pardon. Jesus accomplished this through the shedding of His blood.

Moreover, by the sacrifice of Himself, He put away sin and made a complete end of it with respect to its guilt and condemning power.

3. Another branch of His work was to make reconciliation for iniquity.

The Hebrew word used here signifies to expiate or make atonement for sin by sacrifice, as it frequently does elsewhere in Scripture.

—Exodus 30:10; Leviticus 4:20, 26, 31, 35

That Jesus the Messiah made reconciliation for the sins of His people in this way is sufficiently evident from the writings of the New Testament, particularly from the Epistle to the Hebrews.

Three different Hebrew words are used in this verse to express

sin. This may be intended to show that every kind of sin was to be restrained, sealed up, brought to an end, and expiated by the Messiah. This agrees with the words of the apostle John:

"The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin."

—1 John 1:7

4. According to this prophecy, the Messiah was also to bring in everlasting righteousness.

Surely this could be brought in by no other than Him whose name is:

"The Lord our righteousness."

The author of The Scheme of Literal Prophecy refers this expression to the remarkable piety and religious devotion of the Jews in the days of Onias the high priest, which is highly praised in the books of the Maccabees. Father Harduin regards this as a type of the holiness which the Messiah was to bring into the world.

But however considerable the improvement of those people may have been in the observance of their religion and laws, it could never properly be called an everlasting righteousness.

Sir John Marsham gives a better interpretation. He acknowledges it to be the eternal righteousness of God, to whom righteousness is ascribed earlier in the chapter.

Indeed, it is no other than:

"The righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe."

—Romans 3:22

The Messiah Jesus is the Author of this righteousness, for:

"Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth."

—Romans 10:4

5. By accomplishing these things, the Messiah was also to seal up the vision and prophecy.

This cannot refer to Jeremiah's prophecy concerning the end of the Babylonian captivity, as the author of The Scheme of Literal

Prophecy, following Marsham and Harduin, supposes.

When Daniel received this vision, Jeremiah's prophecy lacked only a very short time before its complete fulfilment. It cannot therefore be imagined that seventy weeks of years were appointed for the accomplishment of an event which was to take place within approximately two years.

By sealing up the vision and prophecy is meant the Messiah's fulfilment of everything which the prophets had foretold concerning Him. In this way He would seal and bring to an end vision and prophecy within the Jewish church.

All this was exactly accomplished by Jesus the Messiah. Through everything He did and suffered, He fully confirmed whatever the Old Testament had foretold concerning the Messiah.

It is an undeniable fact that prophecy has ceased among the Jews since the days of Jesus. They themselves cannot deny it. Indeed, they say:

"There has never arisen a prophet in Israel since the building of the second temple."

They claim that this deficiency was supplied by the Bath-Kol, or voice from heaven. Yet this places the end of prophecy too early, for:

"The law and the prophets were until John."

—Luke 16:16

Nevertheless, prophecy has now ceased. It continued for as long as there was need of it, but when the Messiah, who is the sum and substance of all prophecy, had come, prophecy came to an end among that people.

6. In order for all these things to be accomplished, the Most Holy was to be anointed.

The author of The Scheme of Literal Prophecy, following Marsham and Harduin—or rather Harduin's defender—would understand this as referring either to the high priest or to the temple.

But this cannot be true of the second temple or of any high priest serving under it. The anointing oil, according to the Jews themselves, had been hidden by Josiah and was never afterwards found. Consequently, it could not have been used under the second temple.

It is therefore better, with some Jewish writers, to understand the Messiah, who was typified both by the high priest and by the temple and who was to be:

"Anointed with the oil of gladness above his fellows."

—Psalm 45:7

The whole description agrees perfectly with Jesus the Messiah. He was entirely holy, both in His nature and in His life. Being anointed with the Holy Ghost and with power, He went about doing good and healing all kinds of disease. He preached the gospel to the meek, made expiation for the sins of His people, and now reigns as God's anointed King upon His holy hill of Zion.

Secondly, I shall now consider those events which are more particularly described in verses 25–27, where the seventy weeks, or four hundred and ninety years, are divided into three distinct periods, with particular events assigned to each.

First, I shall consider the seven weeks, or forty-nine years, and the event which was to be accomplished within that period:

"Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem … shall be seven weeks."

—Daniel 9:25

The first matter to be settled is which commandment is intended, for several decrees were issued concerning the restoration of the Jews and the rebuilding of Jerusalem.

The first was the decree of Cyrus, recorded in Ezra 1. By this decree the Jews were permitted to return to their own land and rebuild the house of God at Jerusalem.

"Who is there among you of all his people? his God be with him, and let him go up to Jerusalem, which is in Judah, and build the house of the Lord God of Israel."

—Ezra 1:3

But this decree concerned the rebuilding of the temple rather than the restoration and rebuilding of the city, its streets, and its wall. It cannot therefore be the commandment from which Daniel's seven weeks are to be reckoned.

The second decree was issued by Darius, as recorded in Ezra

6. This was not a new commandment concerning Jerusalem but a confirmation of the former decree of Cyrus relating to the temple. Darius ordered that the work on the house of God should continue and that the expenses should be supplied from the royal revenues.

This decree, therefore, cannot be the one intended in Daniel's prophecy, since it did not concern the rebuilding of Jerusalem itself.

A third decree was issued by Artaxerxes in the seventh year of his reign and is recorded in Ezra 7. By it, Ezra and those Jews who wished to accompany him were permitted to return to Jerusalem. Ezra was also authorised to regulate matters relating to the worship of God and the administration of the law.

Yet this decree likewise contained no command to rebuild the city, its streets, or its wall. It principally concerned religion and the proper ordering of the Jewish commonwealth according to the law of God.

None of these decrees therefore answers the description given by the angel:

"From the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem."

It remains to consider the final decree, issued in the twentieth year of Artaxerxes and recorded in Nehemiah 2. This commandment alone expressly concerned the restoration and rebuilding of the city of Jerusalem.

The occasion of this decree was as follows. Nehemiah received an account of the state of the Jews and of the city of Jerusalem. They were in great affliction and reproach; the wall of Jerusalem was broken down, and its gates had been burned with fire.

Hanani and certain other Jews who had recently come from Jerusalem gave him this report. It filled Nehemiah with such sorrow that, when he later appeared before the king, his grief was plainly visible.

The king asked the reason for his sadness. Nehemiah answered that the city where his fathers were buried lay waste and that its gates had been consumed by fire.

He then took the opportunity to request permission to be sent to Judah, to the city of his fathers' graves, so that he might rebuild it.

He also asked the king for a letter to Asaph, the keeper of the

royal forest, directing him to provide timber for the gates of the palace belonging to the temple, for the wall of the city, and for the house which Nehemiah would occupy.

The king granted all that he requested. By virtue of this grant, Nehemiah immediately went to Jerusalem and encouraged the Jews to rebuild the wall. They undertook the work and completed it in a remarkably short time, notwithstanding all the opposition raised against them.

This grant, or commandment, issued by Artaxerxes to Nehemiah, agrees exactly with the description given in Daniel's prophecy.

The seven weeks were to begin from the going forth of a commandment to restore and rebuild Jerusalem, including its street and wall. No earlier commandment had been issued concerning the city and wall of Jerusalem, and no later commandment was necessary, because under this decree the city, street, and wall were actually rebuilt.

The beginning of the seven weeks, or forty-nine years, must therefore be fixed at this decree. Within that period, the rebuilding of the streets and wall of Jerusalem was to be completed.

That this event belongs specifically to the period of seven weeks is evident from the fact that the period of sixty-two weeks is afterwards assigned to the coming of the Messiah. This leaves the rebuilding of Jerusalem to the first period.

The prophecy also declares that:

> *"The street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times."*
>
> —Daniel 9:25

Some have rendered the expression as meaning that the street and wall would be built within the narrower or shorter of the two periods—that is, within the seven weeks rather than the sixty-two.

Even if the ordinary translation, troublous times, is retained, it agrees perfectly with the history. Nehemiah and the Jews encountered considerable trouble and opposition from Sanballat, Tobiah, and Geshem the Arabian.

—Nehemiah 4; 6

Seven weeks, or forty-nine years, were therefore cut out, limited, and appointed for the completion of this work. Within that period,

the city could be rebuilt upon its former site, its streets and open places properly filled with houses, and its wall firmly established upon its foundation.

Indeed, so considerable a work could hardly have been completed in much less time.

Secondly, I shall consider the period of sixty-two weeks.

These weeks begin where the first seven weeks end. The seven weeks and the sixty-two weeks do not have the same starting point, as the author of The Scheme of Literal Prophecy, following Father Harduin, maintains when he argues for abbreviated weeks.

The angel reckons the seven weeks and the sixty-two weeks together as one continuous period reaching to the Messiah:

> *"From the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks."*
>
> —Daniel 9:25

Together, these amount to sixty-nine weeks, or four hundred and eighty-three years.

The particular event assigned to the first seven weeks was the rebuilding of the street and wall of Jerusalem. This work was to be completed within, or near the end of, that first period. This is the true reason why the angel uses this unusual manner of reckoning.

Having considered the first period and the event belonging to it, I now proceed to the second and longer period, which reaches to the death of the Messiah.

To explain this part of the prophecy, three things must be considered:

1. Who is meant by the Messiah and by Messiah the Prince.

2. What is meant by His being cut off, and by His being cut off not for Himself.

3. The exact and precise time of His being cut off, according to this prophecy.

First, I shall inquire who is meant by the Messiah and by Messiah the Prince.

That Messiah the Prince in verse 25 is the same Person as the Messiah who was to be cut off in verse 26 is evident at first sight. There is no distinguishing mark anywhere in the prophecy which would lead us to regard them as different persons.

Nevertheless, the author of The Scheme of Literal Prophecy, with the assistance of Father Harduin, has discovered no fewer than three Messiahs in this passage: Cyrus, Judas Maccabaeus, and Onias the high priest.

He regards Cyrus and Judas Maccabaeus as princely Messiahs, and Onias as a priestly Messiah.

According to this interpretation, Cyrus appeared at the end of the seven weeks, or forty-nine years, reckoned from the fourth year of Jehoiakim. Judas Maccabaeus appeared at the end of the sixty-two weeks, or four hundred and thirty-four years, reckoned from the same starting point. At approximately the same time, Onias the high priest is said to have arisen—a righteous and holy man who was unjustly put to death.

But Cyrus cannot be the Messiah intended in verse 25. According to this scheme, he would appear at the end of the seven weeks, yet he had died long before those weeks began.

Nor can Judas Maccabaeus be the Messiah who was to appear after the sixty-two weeks, even if those weeks are supposed to begin at the same time as the first seven. Judas must have lived and died many years before that period expired.

For the same reason, Onias the high priest cannot be intended. Father Harduin regards the death of Onias as a type of the death of the true Messiah, Jesus, whom he acknowledges to be directly intended by the Holy Ghost in this prophecy.

On this point, the author of The Scheme of Literal Prophecy differs from Harduin, since he will not allow Jesus the Messiah to be intended at all. Harduin, however, expressly maintains that the prophecy belongs particularly to Christ and that it was not fulfilled in the days of Antiochus and Judas Maccabaeus.

He argues that Onias could not properly be called the Most Holy, since that title strictly belongs only to Him who is pre-eminently the Holy One. Nor did everlasting righteousness appear in the days of Onias. Neither was Onias properly the Messiah, as the Jews

themselves acknowledge.

It was not fulfilled in Onias that the whole Jewish nation should reject him and, on that account, itself be rejected. Nor did the desolation of the temple continue from the death of Onias until the final consummation.

Before the Jewish people ceased to exist as a nation, and before the last and complete destruction of the temple, all the prophecies concerning the Messiah were to be fulfilled.

Some Jewish writers would have Herod Agrippa understood as the Messiah who was to be cut off. They claim that he was the last king of the Jews and that he was killed by Vespasian during the destruction of Jerusalem.

But this account is entirely false. Agrippa was not properly king of the Jews, since his jurisdiction extended only over Galilee. He was not killed by Vespasian but was an ally of the Romans. He lived for several years after the destruction of Jerusalem and eventually died in peace.

This interpretation is plainly intended to prevent the application of the prophecy to the Messiah, although some Jewish writers have acknowledged that it belongs to Him.

Rabbi Nehemiah, who lived about fifty years before Christ, declared that the time of the Messiah signified by Daniel could not be extended beyond those fifty years.

The Jews also relate that Jonathan ben Uzziel, after completing his Targum on the Law, attempted to compose one upon the Hagiographa. He was prevented by a voice from heaven, which gave this reason: that within those writings the end of the Messiah was revealed—that is, the time of the Messiah's being cut off, as fixed in the book of Daniel, which belongs to the Hagiographa.

That the Messiah is intended here may also be gathered from the name and title given to Him.

He is called Nagid, the Prince, who was to arise from the tribe of Judah:

> *"For Judah prevailed above his brethren, and of him came the chief ruler."*
>
> —1 Chronicles 5:2

More particularly, He is called Messiah. This name was well

known among the Jews in the days of Jesus as belonging to that great Person foretold by all the prophets. It occurs sixty or seventy times in the Targums.

If the name does not refer to Him here, it will be difficult to find another passage in which it is given to Him absolutely and by way of distinction.

Yet it is evident that He was commonly known among the Jews by this name, even among the ordinary people:

"We have found the Messias."

—John 1:41

"I know that Messias cometh, which is called Christ."

—John 4:25

They must surely have learned this name from some prophecy, and it is difficult to understand from where, unless from this prophecy of Daniel.

Besides, the work assigned to this Person can agree with no other. Its several branches have already been described in verse 24.

Secondly, I shall now inquire what is meant by the Messiah's being cut off.

Secondly, I shall inquire what is meant by the Messiah's being cut off.

The Hebrew word used here signifies being cut off in a judicial manner, as it frequently does elsewhere in Scripture.

—Genesis 17:14; Exodus 12:15; Numbers 15:30–31

When the Messiah is said to be cut off, the meaning is that He would die and that His death would be penal, inflicted upon Him in a judicial way.

This was fulfilled in Jesus. He was tried, condemned, and sentenced to death by men in a judicial manner, and He was also made a curse by God.

In this He fulfilled what had been prophesied concerning the Messiah by Isaiah:

"He was taken from prison and from judgment: and who shall declare his generation? for he was cut off out of the land of the living."

—Isaiah 53:8

He was stricken for the transgression of the people.

Lest anyone should suppose that He was cut off because of some iniquity found in Him, the angel adds:

"But not for himself."

—Daniel 9:26

He did not suffer for any sin of His own. As Isaiah declares:

"He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities."

—Isaiah 53:5

Some choose to translate the words differently: He shall have no people. They understand this to mean that few among the Jews would believe in Him or obey Him, as was indeed the case with Jesus.

Others render them: They shall not be His people. According to this interpretation, the Jews, through their rejection of Jesus the Messiah, were themselves rejected from being the people of God.

Others understand the expression to mean that there would be none to help Him in obtaining eternal redemption. This is also true, for He needed no assistance in accomplishing that work.

Jarchi interprets the expression as meaning He is not, a phrase which is frequently used in Scripture to signify death.

—Genesis 42:13, 32, 36; Jeremiah 31:15

However the words are understood, they agree with Jesus. He was judicially cut off, not for any sin of His own, but for the transgressions of others.

Thirdly, I shall now consider the exact and precise time of the Messiah's being cut off according to this prophecy.

The author of The Scheme of Literal Prophecy objects to applying this prophecy to the Messiah. He argues that the Jews in the time of Jesus did not understand Daniel's Messiah, who was to be cut off, as having any connection with the Messiah whom they expected. Their opinion, he says, was that the Messiah would never die. He further observes that even the apostles and disciples of Jesus doubted that He could be the Christ when they saw Him suffer and die.

To this I answer that such opinions do not prove that the Messiah, according to the prophets, was not to die. They prove only the ignorance of those who held them. This ignorance appears to have arisen from their failure to understand that the Messiah was to

be both God and man.

Nor is it surprising that the common people were ignorant of these things when their learned teachers were also confused about them. For this reason, they were unable to answer Christ when He asked them how the Messiah could be both David's Son and David's Lord.

—Matthew 22:42–46

The belief which the people had learned from the law—that Christ abides for ever—was in no way inconsistent with His death. Though Jesus died, He is now alive and will continue for evermore.

It is certain that the Jews were aware that the Messiah described by the prophets was to suffer and die, as well as to be exalted and glorified. Finding these different descriptions, which they imagined could not be reconciled in one Person, they invented the idea of two Messiahs.

The first they call Messiah the son of Joseph, whom they say will be slain in the war of Gog and Magog. The second they call Messiah the son of David, whom they imagine will be a powerful, magnificent, and victorious prince. Even concerning the duration of his reign, however, they disagree among themselves.

As for the disciples of Jesus, it must be acknowledged that there was considerable ignorance, weakness of faith, and unbelief among them, particularly in the two disciples referred to by this author.

All this, however, was removed by Christ's resurrection from the dead. Through His resurrection, life and immortality were brought to light, and He was declared with power to be the Son of God and the true Messiah.

These objections are therefore insufficient to prove either that the Messiah is not intended in Daniel's prophecy or that the Jews did not understand the prophecy as referring to Him.

They might understand that the prophecy concerned the Messiah and yet fail to understand everything said about Him within it. Still less might they be able to reconcile those things with the other descriptions of Him found elsewhere in Scripture.

I have already produced examples of Jewish writers, both before and after the time of Jesus, who understood this prophecy as referring to the Messiah.

We also have the testimony of Josephus in this matter and, as Bishop Chandler observes, in Josephus we have the testimony of the whole Jewish nation.

Thirdly, I shall now consider the exact and precise time of the Messiah's being cut off according to this prophecy.

Thirdly, I shall consider the exact and precise time of the Messiah's being cut off.

In order to do this, it is necessary first to determine what form of year is used in the prophecy. It is highly reasonable to suppose that Daniel refers to the kind of year then commonly used among the Jews.

The learned Dr Marshall, whose calculation I have followed throughout this discussion of the seventy weeks, has sufficiently shown that the year commonly used not only among the Egyptians, Chaldeans, Persians, Greeks, and other Asian nations, but also among the ancient Jews, consisted of exactly three hundred and sixty days. They reckoned thirty days to each month and twelve months to each year.

This method of reckoning appears to be as ancient as the Flood.

—Genesis 7:11, 24; 8:3–4

What has fully satisfied me that this form of year is intended here is that the seventy years of the Babylonian captivity—which had not completely expired when Daniel received this prophecy—were calculated according to this form of year, as the learned writer already mentioned has shown.

There is also further confirmation in the Revelation. John frequently follows Daniel's language. Daniel speaks of:

"A time and times and the dividing of time."

—Daniel 7:25

John explains the same period as forty-two months and as one thousand two hundred and sixty days.

—Revelation 12:6, 14; 13:5

That number of days can be reduced to three and a half years only by reckoning a year as three hundred and sixty days.

From the whole, therefore, it appears that the form of year then commonly used followed this ancient Eastern method of calculation.

The famous Selden does indeed tell us that the Jewish astronomers

possessed a solar year consisting of three hundred and sixty-five days and six hours. At the same time, however, he informs us that this calculation was used only in the schools, because it was useful in learned studies, and was not the form of year commonly used among the people.

It is therefore surprising that the author of The Scheme of Literal Prophecy should describe Chaldean and lunar years as being of the same form and as both consisting of three hundred and eighty days.

A lunar year, strictly understood, contains only three hundred and fifty-four days and approximately nine hours. The Jews themselves now calculate it in this way when they have an equal number of full and deficient months—that is, when six months contain thirty days each and the other six contain twenty-nine.

The total number of days in their year varies according to the number of full and deficient months. Their highest number is three hundred and fifty-six days, and their lowest is three hundred and fifty-two.

A Chaldean year, however, according to the ancient Eastern calculation, consisted of three hundred and sixty days, not three hundred and eighty. Perhaps the figures 380 have been mistakenly printed instead of 360. Even so, lunar and Chaldean years cannot be regarded as identical.

If the author refers instead to the form of year used by the Jewish Sanhedrin for regulating their festivals, this does not support his position either.

Whenever they considered it necessary, they inserted a thirteenth month, called Veadar, or the second Adar. This method of reckoning was entirely unscriptural and also very uncertain, since it depended upon the judgment, will, and pleasure of the Sanhedrin, although the Jews claim that Moses received this system of intercalation at Mount Sinai.

If this is the form of year intended, then an intercalated year plainly contained more than three hundred and eighty days.

When their months were equally divided between thirty and twenty-nine days, and even if the additional month of Veadar contained only twenty-nine days, the year would still contain three hundred and eighty-three days.

According to their different reckonings of full and deficient months, such a year sometimes contained three hundred and eighty-five or three hundred and eighty-six days, while even the lowest number was three hundred and eighty-one.

But I return from this digression.

The form of year used in Daniel's prophecy appears to have been that commonly employed among the Eastern nations, consisting of three hundred and sixty days.

The sixty-nine weeks appointed before the cutting off of the Messiah therefore amount to four hundred and eighty-three such years. We may now consider how this event received its full and exact accomplishment.

From the going forth of the commandment to restore and rebuild Jerusalem, in the month Nisan—which corresponds to our April—in the twentieth year of Artaxerxes, king of Persia, until the month Iyar—which corresponds to our May—in the eighteenth year of Tiberius, emperor of Rome, in the thirty-second year of the commonly received Christian era, there were exactly four hundred and eighty-three of these Eastern years.

At that point Daniel's sixty-nine weeks, or four hundred and eighty-three years, came to an end.

We must therefore look for the cutting off of the Messiah immediately afterwards, before one year of the following week had passed.

Accordingly, Jesus the Messiah was cut off at the following Passover, in the month Nisan, during the nineteenth year of Tiberius and the thirty-third year of the commonly received Christian era.

In this way, this great and remarkable prediction received its exact fulfilment.

For a fuller account of the particular calculation of these weeks and years, I refer the reader to Mr Marshall's excellent Chronological Treatise upon the Seventy Weeks of Daniel, together with the chronological tables included in it.

There he demonstrates the truth of this calculation in agreement with Scripture, with this prophecy in all its parts, and with Ptolemy's Canon, that golden rule of chronology.

Having therefore proved that the time appointed in this

prophecy for the Messiah's being cut off was literally, precisely, and exactly fulfilled in the death of Jesus the Messiah, I have no further immediate concern with this part of the prophecy.

Nevertheless, because I am unwilling to pass over any part of so important a prophecy, I shall now consider the remaining week and the events which were to be accomplished within it.

Thirdly, I shall consider the remaining week and the events which were to be accomplished within it.

After the Messiah was cut off, the destruction of the Jewish nation, city, and temple was soon to follow. This is expressed generally at the end of verse 26.

After informing Daniel that the Messiah's death would take place at the end of the sixty-nine weeks, the angel adds:

> *"And the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined."*
>
> —Daniel 9:26

The meaning is that, within a comparatively short time after the Messiah had been cut off, the Roman army, under the command of Vespasian, would enter the land of Judea, make war upon it, and destroy both Jerusalem and its famous temple.

The destruction would be universal, like a mighty flood or violent inundation spreading over the whole country and carrying everything before it. From the beginning of the war to its conclusion, complete ruin and desolation had been determined by God upon that people and nation.

Some learned men understand the prince that shall come to mean Messiah the Prince. According to this interpretation, the Romans were His people in the sense that, under His sovereign direction and by His command, they inflicted these judgments upon the Jewish nation.

I prefer, however, to understand the prince as Titus Vespasian, who came shortly after the death of the Messiah and caused these terrible devastations throughout Judea. Many Jewish writers interpret the passage in the same way.

It should also be observed that the words that shall come

are connected not with the people, but with the prince. Aquila accordingly translates the expression as:

"The people of the prince who is to come,"

or:

"The people of the future prince."

The Septuagint reads the words in the same form.

I shall now consider the period within which the determined desolation was to be accomplished. This was the remaining week, and especially its latter half. The events belonging to this period are described more particularly in verse 27:

> *"And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate."*
>
> —Daniel 9:27

Three particular events are predicted in this verse.

First, the Roman people, who were to destroy the city and the sanctuary, would make peace with many nations for the space of one week, or seven years, so that they might accomplish this destruction more easily.

This is what is meant by the words:

> *"And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week."*
>
> —Daniel 9:27

At the beginning of this week, the Romans did in fact make peace with the Parthians, Medes, and Armenians. By removing the threat of war from those nations, they were able to direct their forces more fully against Judea. In this way, the event foretold by the prophet received its accomplishment.

Secondly, the same people were to cause the sacrifice and oblation to cease in the midst, or latter half, of the week:

> *"And in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease."*
>
> —Daniel 9:27

This was literally fulfilled toward the close of the latter half of the week.

While Jerusalem was closely besieged by Titus, the severity of the siege, the divisions among the people, the lack of men and opportunity to offer sacrifice, and the absence of animals suitable for offerings caused the daily sacrifice entirely to cease.

Josephus records that this brought great grief upon the people.

From the destruction of the city and temple until the present time, the Jews have never again offered sacrifice. They themselves regard it as unlawful to do so outside their own land and apart from the temple.

Thirdly, during the same half of the week, the land was to be made desolate because of the overspreading of abominations:

"And for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate."

—Daniel 9:27

The Hebrew words may be rendered:

"Upon the wing,"

or:

"Upon the battlements of the temple, shall be the abominations of the desolator"—that is, of the one who makes desolate.

This may refer to the standards of the Roman army, upon which were displayed images of their gods and emperors. These standards were set up in the holy place and sacrifices were offered before them. Nothing could have been a greater abomination to the Jews.

The words may also refer to the blood of the zealots who were slain upon the battlements of the temple, by which the holy place was polluted and defiled.

The city and sanctuary were then to continue in ruin and desolation until the full accomplishment of God's determined vengeance had been poured out upon the desolate Jewish people.

This judgment has been fulfilled and continues even to the present day.

It may now be proper to inquire when this one week, or period of seven years, began, during which these events were to be accomplished.

This may easily be learned from its conclusion. The week must have ended with the destruction of the city and temple of Jerusalem, when the daily sacrifice ceased and the abomination of desolation

was set up.

This took place in the commonly received year AD 70. Consequently, the seven-year period must have begun in AD 63.

This was more than thirty years after the expiration of the sixty-nine weeks. One might naturally have expected the final week to begin immediately after the sixty-nine, had not the particular descriptions in the text fixed it to the period in which these events occurred.

The reason why God's judgments were not immediately inflicted upon the Jewish nation for its rejection of the Messiah, but were delayed until this time, appears to have been the display of His goodness, patience, and longsuffering toward that people.

As He gave the ancient world time to repent before bringing the Flood upon it, so He gave this nation time also.

But every expression of His grace and goodness was slighted and despised. Therefore, near the beginning of this one week, which had been cut out and determined upon them, events began to move toward their final ruin and destruction.

At the close of the week, that destruction was fully accomplished.

Since the utmost extent of this prophecy reaches to the destruction of Jerusalem and its temple, as many Jewish writers themselves acknowledge, it may fairly be concluded that the Messiah must already have come.

If the Messiah was to be cut off at the end of sixty-nine weeks out of the seventy determined upon Daniel's people and city, and if the whole seventy weeks were fully accomplished many centuries ago in the complete desolation of that people and city, then the Messiah must also have come and been cut off many centuries ago.

The Jews themselves are conscious of the force of this argument. For this reason, they have pronounced a curse upon those who calculate the time of the Messiah. Their Talmud records the words:

"Let them burst,"

or, as others render them:

"Let their bones rot who calculate the times."

This was evidently intended to discourage the people from examining Daniel's prophecy, in which the time of the Messiah's being cut off is precisely fixed, and so to keep them in ignorance and

unbelief concerning the true Messiah, Jesus, who came and was cut off at the exact time appointed.

I shall conclude this chapter by observing that the prophecy in Hosea has been exactly fulfilled in this people:

"For the children of Israel shall abide many days without a king, and without a prince, and without a sacrifice, and without an image, and without an ephod, and without teraphim."

—Hosea 3:4

They are no longer a political body possessing rule and dominion among themselves. They have no king or prince of their own. The sceptre has departed from them, and no sacrifice is offered by them, for the daily sacrifice has ceased.

Though they were once a people greatly inclined to idolatrous worship, they now have no image among them.

May the following words receive the same exact fulfilment, as there is good reason to believe they will in God's appointed time:

"Afterward shall the children of Israel return, and seek the Lord their God, and David their king; and shall fear the Lord and his goodness in the latter days."

—Hosea 3:5

Their own Targumist paraphrases the words in this way:

"They shall obey the Messiah, the Son of David their King, and shall fear the Lord and His goodness in the latter days."

CHAPTER 4

Showing the Lineage and Descent of the Messiah

Having considered the time of the Messiah's coming into the world, it is now proper to inquire into His lineage and descent: from what nation He was to arise, and from which tribe and family within that nation He was to be born. The prophecies of the Old Testament give us clear information concerning these matters.

First, it appears that He was to be of the nation and stock of Israel.

No stranger was permitted to sit upon the throne of Israel. Their kings generally were required to arise from among their own people, and this must be especially true of the Messiah their King.

Of Him it was expressly prophesied:

> *"And their nobles shall be of themselves, and their governor shall proceed from the midst of them."*
>
> —Jeremiah 30:21

The Targum renders the words:

"Their king shall be anointed from among themselves, and their Messiah shall be revealed from the midst of them."

The passage is also applied to the Messiah in the Talmud.

Kimchi likewise says upon the text:

"It is very well known that the King Messiah shall be of Israel."

It is equally well known that Jesus was of the same stock. In this chiefly consisted the glory and superiority of the Jewish nation above the Gentiles:

> *"Of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever."*
>
> —Romans 9:5

To this Jesus referred when He said to the woman of Samaria:

"Salvation is of the Jews."

—John 4:22

The author of A Discourse of the Grounds and Reasons of the Christian Religion himself acknowledges that the words appear to signify that the Messiah, Saviour, or Redeemer of Israel would arise from among the Jews of Jerusalem.

The first prophecy concerning the Messiah did not determine

from what particular people or nation He would arise. Had He arisen from any nation or family among mankind, it would have been sufficient to fulfil that original promise.

But after the promise and oath were given to Abraham, it became necessary that the Messiah should be of his seed.

Jesus was of Abraham's seed and is therefore called:

"The son of Abraham."

—Matthew 1:1

He was an Israelite in the fullest and most extensive sense of that expression.

It therefore follows that no person belonging to another nation could be the Messiah, whatever claim he might make.

Herod could not be the Messiah, because he was an Idumaean. Some have supposed that this was the chief belief of those called the Herodians, though it is more probable that they were simply Herod's courtiers or household servants.

Neither could Vespasian be the Messiah, because he was a Roman, although Josephus—perhaps more from flattery than from his true judgment—bestowed that title upon him.

Secondly, it is equally plain that the Messiah was to arise from the tribe of Judah.

For this reason, He is called Shiloh—that is, Judah's Son. On this account, the tribe of Judah received pre-eminence above the other tribes:

"For Judah prevailed above his brethren, and of him came the chief ruler."

—1 Chronicles 5:2

The chief ruler here intended is the Nagid, the Prince Messiah, who was to arise from Judah.

For this reason, the tribe of Judah was preserved as a distinct tribe until and beyond the time of Jesus, while the other tribes were carried into captivity, scattered among the nations, and never returned as distinct tribes.

It is therefore evident, as the apostle says:

"It is evident that our Lord sprang out of Juda."

—Hebrews 7:14

Hence one of His distinguished titles is:

"The Lion of the tribe of Juda."

—Revelation 5:5

This title should be compared with Jacob's description of Judah as a lion's whelp.

—Genesis 49:9

Thirdly, it is no less evident from the prophecies of the Old Testament that the Messiah was to arise from the house and family of David.

First, the Messiah is called the Root of Jesse and the Rod which would come forth from his stem:

"And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots."

—Isaiah 11:1

The Targum paraphrases the words in this way:

"A king shall come forth from the sons of Jesse, and the Messiah shall be anointed from among his children's children."

Many Jewish writers acknowledge this to be a prophecy concerning the Messiah.

The same is true of the words later in the chapter:

"And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people."

—Isaiah 11:10

That the Messiah is intended appears plainly from the whole context. It may be proved from the extraordinary qualifications given to this Person, from His work and office in judging the world, and from the righteousness and faithfulness with which He will perform that judgment.

—Isaiah 11:2–5

The same conclusion may also be drawn from the peaceful character of His kingdom, described in verses 6–9, and from the remarkable gathering of the Gentiles to Him, foretold in verses 10–12.

The prophecy in verse 1 very aptly describes the low, poor, and reduced condition of Jesse's, or David's, family at the time when the

Messiah would arise from it.

That family would resemble a tree cut down almost to its roots, with nothing visible except a stem or stump beneath the ground. Yet from that seemingly lifeless stock a noble Branch would spring forth.

This agrees exactly with the condition of David's family when Jesus came from it. Though that house had once been powerful and flourishing, it had by then been brought into a very low and obscure state.

Nevertheless, from the roots and stem of Jesse, God brought forth His Servant, the Branch.

Even to this day, the Jews pray for the Messiah under the title the Son of Jesse.

This prophecy cannot properly be understood of Hezekiah, as a later writer has supposed. Hezekiah had already been born when the prophecy was delivered and must then have been ten or twelve years of age. He therefore could not be the Rod who was still to come forth from the stem of Jesse.

Secondly, on account of His descent from David's family, the Messiah is also called the Son of David.

Secondly, on account of His descent from David's family, the Messiah is called the Son of David.

This is a title which the Jews frequently give to the Messiah, and it was commonly used among them in the days of Jesus.

Christ Himself asked them:

"What think ye of Christ? whose son is he?"

—Matthew 22:42

They immediately answered:

"The Son of David."

They gave this answer without hesitation because it was universally received among them that the Messiah would arise from David's line.

Nor was this belief confined to the wise and learned. It was also known among the common people. The blind man who begged by the roadside addressed Jesus as the Son of David because he believed Him to be the Messiah.

Even the children in the temple cried:

"Hosanna to the Son of David."

It is also sufficiently evident that Jesus belonged to this family, for both Joseph, His supposed father, and Mary, His true mother, were of the house of David.

The author of The Scheme of Literal Prophecy objects that it does not appear that the Virgin Mary belonged to David's line, but rather to some family within the tribe of Levi.

He further argues that Jesus could not be descended from David through Mary, since Matthew traces His descent from David through Joseph, who was not His natural father but was only betrothed to Mary at the time of Jesus' birth.

He adds that the Jews did not reckon genealogies through women.

To this I reply that no one disputes that Joseph, the husband of Mary, belonged to the line and family of David.

That Mary belonged to the same line and family may also be gathered from the fact that she was enrolled with Joseph in the same city:

"And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city.

"And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judaea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem; because he was of the house and lineage of David:

"To be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child."

—Luke 2:3–5

As Grotius observes, if Mary had not belonged to the house and family of David, she ought to have been enrolled in the city belonging to her own family rather than in Bethlehem.

Besides, she is expressly described as belonging to the house of David:

"To a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary."

—Luke 1:27

The words of the house of David may properly be connected with the virgin rather than merely with Joseph. The purpose of the passage is not simply to describe Joseph, to whom she was betrothed,

but to identify the virgin herself to whom the angel Gabriel was sent.

This understanding is fully consistent with the grammatical construction of the passage, as several learned men have observed.

The author's principal reason for supposing that Mary belonged to the tribe of Levi appears to be that Elizabeth, who was of the house of Aaron, is called her cousin.

—Luke 1:5, 36

From this he seems to conclude that Mary and Elizabeth must have belonged to the same tribe and family.

But although Elizabeth's father was of the house of Aaron, her mother may have belonged to the house of David in the tribe of Judah. In this way, Elizabeth and Mary could properly be related.

Nor can the author object that marriage between different tribes or families was either unlawful or unusual. According to his own interpretation, Joseph, who belonged to the house of David in the tribe of Judah, married Mary, whom he supposes to have belonged to the house of Aaron in the tribe of Levi.

The same author further argues that Jesus could not have descended from David through Mary because Matthew traces His descent through Joseph, who was not His natural father but was only betrothed to Mary at the time of His birth.

I readily acknowledge that Matthew presents Jesus as belonging to David's line through Joseph. But I cannot see how this proves that Jesus could not also have descended from David through the Virgin.

If Joseph and Mary both belonged to the same house and family, as has already been shown, then Matthew's tracing of Jesus through Joseph—His reputed father and the husband of His true mother—does not exclude His natural descent from David through Mary.

The author regards Matthew's method as extraordinary, supposing that, if Jesus descended from David through Mary, the Evangelist ought to have traced the genealogy through her rather than through Joseph.

But the author himself observes that the Jews did not ordinarily reckon families through women. Their common maxim was that the family of the mother was not regarded as the family of the child.

For this reason, the genealogy of Jesus is traced through Joseph, to whom Mary was espoused, rather than directly through Mary.

Joseph was regarded as the father of Jesus, for the Jews knew of no other. Had Joseph belonged to any family other than that of David, the Jews would have rejected the claims of Jesus on that ground alone.

Matthew therefore gives the genealogy through Joseph in order to remove this possible objection.

It should also be observed that Matthew's principal purpose is not so much to give the natural descent of Jesus, as Luke does, but to establish His royal line and legal right.

Since Jesus was the lawful heir of Joseph—being born of Joseph's wife, without adultery and during Joseph's lifetime—He possessed an unquestionable legal claim to the crown and throne of David.

For if a child begotten by a woman after her husband's death, through marriage to his nearest brother, was by the law of Deuteronomy 25 to be regarded as the son, rightful heir, and successor of the deceased, then much more may Jesus be accounted the lawful Son and heir of Joseph.

He was born of Joseph's wife while Joseph himself was still living and while the marriage remained lawful and undefiled. Jesus therefore possessed, through Joseph, a legal right to the crown and throne of David, while through Mary He was naturally descended from David's family.

Moreover, David was an eminent type of the Messiah in many respects: in the lowliness of his origin, the beauty of his person, his wisdom and prudence, his courage and valour, his holiness, and the extraordinary gifts of the Spirit with which he was endowed.

He also typified the Messiah in his kingly office, in the battles he fought, and in the victories he obtained.

The Messiah might therefore properly bear David's name. Nor is it surprising that David so frequently speaks of the Messiah in his own person, or that many things spoken concerning David may also be very suitably applied to Him.

"Of this man's seed hath God according to his promise raised unto Israel a Saviour, Jesus."

—Acts 13:23

CHAPTER 5

Concerning the Miraculous Conception and Birth of the Messiah

Having considered the lineage and descent of the Messiah, I shall now inquire into the manner of His conception and birth, which were to be extraordinary and without precedent.

Several prophecies show that He was to be born of a virgin. I shall endeavour to establish this truth by considering the relevant passages, beginning with Isaiah 7:14:

"Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel."

This is the principal prophecy concerning the matter. Although the truth may have been hinted at before, it does not appear to have been so clearly revealed until this point.

The Person and office of the Messiah were gradually revealed to mankind. Some ages possessed only a faint and limited view of Him, while later generations received a fuller and clearer revelation.

The first prophecy may indeed be understood as containing this truth when it speaks of the Messiah as the seed of the woman. Yet it does not express the matter as clearly as Isaiah's prophecy.

Eve herself does not appear to have understood it fully. At the birth of her first child she said:

"I have gotten a man from the Lord."

—Genesis 4:1

Jonathan ben Uzziel paraphrases her words:

"I have gotten a man, the Angel of the Lord."

According to this interpretation, Eve supposed that she had brought forth the promised Seed—the Angel of God's presence and the Messenger of the covenant.

But had she clearly known that the Messiah was to be born of a virgin, she could not have imagined that she herself had given birth to Him.

Perhaps this also explains why many godly women in Israel, such as Rachel and Hannah, were so earnest in their desire for children. Each may have hoped that the Messiah would arise from her, since the extraordinary manner of His birth had not yet been clearly revealed.

Isaiah's prophecy, however, places the matter beyond doubt: the Messiah was to be born of a virgin.

First, the Hebrew word translated virgin signifies a virgin and no other.

First, the Hebrew word almah, translated virgin, signifies a virgin and no other.

It is true that the word properly describes a young woman of marriageable age. Yet wherever it occurs in Scripture, it refers to one who is unmarried and has not known a man.

When Abraham's servant sought a wife for Isaac, he spoke of the young woman who would come to draw water:

"Behold, I stand by the well of water; and it shall come to pass, that when the virgin cometh forth to draw water…"

—Genesis 24:43

The woman intended was Rebekah, of whom it had already been said:

"And the damsel was very fair to look upon, a virgin, neither had any man known her."

—Genesis 24:16

The word therefore clearly signifies a virgin in that passage.

The same is true in the Song of Solomon:

"There are threescore queens, and fourscore concubines, and virgins without number."

—Song of Solomon 6:8

These virgins are plainly distinguished both from married women and from concubines.

Again, when Miriam watched the ark in which the infant Moses had been placed, she is described by the same word. She was then an unmarried young woman.

—Exodus 2:8

There is therefore no passage in Scripture in which the word can be proved to signify a married woman.

It is objected that another Hebrew word, bethulah, would have expressed virginity more certainly. But that word is not always used without some further explanation. Joel speaks of:

"A virgin girded with sackcloth for the husband of her youth."

—Joel 1:8

The woman there described had been married or betrothed, and therefore the word alone does not necessarily express everything required in this prophecy.

The word chosen by Isaiah was consequently well suited to describe an unmarried young woman who had never known a man.

This was also the understanding of the ancient Greek translators. Long before the birth of Jesus, they rendered the Hebrew word by parthenos, which properly signifies a virgin.

Their translation cannot reasonably be charged with having been altered to favour Christianity, since it was made before the Christian religion existed.

The ancient Jews therefore understood the prophecy as Christians do: that the woman who would conceive and bear the promised Son was truly a virgin.

Secondly, the birth of this Son is represented as something astonishing and extraordinary—as a sign, a wonder, and a miracle. For this reason, the word behold is placed before it:

"Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son."

—Isaiah 7:14

If the prophet meant only that a young married woman would conceive a child, where would the wonder lie? Such an event occurs continually and contains nothing extraordinary.

If this were all that was intended, there would have been no need for so solemn an introduction:

"Hear ye now, O house of David … the Lord himself shall give you a sign."

Some Jewish writers maintain that the sign consisted in the young woman's being naturally incapable of conception at the time the prophecy was given. But there is no suggestion of this either in the words themselves or in the surrounding context.

Others say that the wonder lay in the prediction that the child would be male rather than female.

But the sign or wonder does not consist merely in the prophet's correctly foretelling the sex of the child. Such a prediction would have

given the prophet little credit and the house of David little comfort, since it might more easily have been attributed to a fortunate guess than to the Spirit of prophecy.

Much less can the wonder consist in the name which the child was to bear, since the giving of an unusual or significant name is not in itself miraculous.

The sign must therefore lie in the extraordinary manner of the conception and birth: a virgin would conceive and bear a son without knowing a man.

This was truly a sign worthy of God Himself—a new and unheard-of work, beyond the ordinary course of nature and possible only through divine power.

Thirdly, the name given to this extraordinary Child shows that the Messiah is intended:

"And shall call his name Immanuel."

—Isaiah 7:14

The name Immanuel signifies God with us. It therefore describes a Person who is both God and man: God dwelling with mankind in human nature.

This name cannot properly belong to any ordinary child. It agrees only with the Messiah, whose nature and office are elsewhere described in terms which declare both His humanity and His deity.

The same Child is spoken of shortly afterwards by the prophet:

"For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder."

—Isaiah 9:6

Though born as a child, He is also called:

"*Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.*"

—Isaiah 9:6

The Child promised in the seventh chapter and the Child described in the ninth are therefore one and the same Person. He was to be truly born of a woman and yet to possess the nature and titles of God.

This was exactly fulfilled in Jesus. He was conceived in the womb of the Virgin Mary by the power of the Holy Ghost and was born

without the intervention of a human father.

The Evangelist expressly applies Isaiah's prophecy to Him:

> *"Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us."*
>
> —Matthew 1:23

Although His personal name was Jesus, He was truly Immanuel, for in Him God was manifested in the flesh and dwelt among men.

The words shall call his name do not necessarily mean that Immanuel would be the name commonly used in addressing Him. In Scripture, a person is often said to be called by a name when the truth and character expressed by that name properly belong to him.

Thus the Messiah is called Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, and the Prince of Peace, although these were not used as His ordinary personal names.

In the same way, Jesus is called Immanuel because He is in truth God with us.

A further objection is that Scripture never expressly says that Jesus ate butter and honey, as is said of this Child:

> *"Butter and honey shall he eat, that he may know to refuse the evil, and choose the good."*
>
> —Isaiah 7:15

This objection is extremely weak. Although the Evangelists do not record that Jesus ate these particular foods, it does not follow that He never did so.

Indeed, it is highly reasonable to suppose that He did. The land of Canaan, where He was born, was described as a land flowing with milk and honey. These were therefore common foods, even among poorer families, and Jesus was born into such a family.

The expression also appears designed to establish the reality of His human nature. He would be nourished and brought up as other children were. At the same time, it points particularly to the land in which He was to be born.

For reasons such as these, some have attempted to apply the prophecy not to Jesus but to Ahaz's wife and his son Hezekiah. This interpretation, however, is impossible.

Ahaz reigned for only sixteen years, while Hezekiah was twenty-five years old when he succeeded him. Hezekiah must therefore have been about nine years old when Ahaz began to reign and no less than eleven or twelve when this prophecy was delivered. He could not therefore be the Child whose birth was still being foretold.

—2 Kings 16:2; 18:2

Some Jewish writers, recognising this difficulty, have abandoned the application to Hezekiah and instead understand the prophecy of another son of Ahaz, born to some young woman.

But no other son of Ahaz was ever lord over the land of Judah, as Immanuel is represented to be:

"The stretching out of his wings shall fill the breadth of thy land, O Immanuel."

—Isaiah 8:8

Nor can the prophecy refer to Isaiah's wife and son. Isaiah would not have called his wife a virgin after she had already borne him children, one of whom was then present with him.

He would not even have described her merely as a young woman, but as the prophetess, as he does elsewhere.

—Isaiah 8:3

Moreover, no son of Isaiah ever became king of Judah or possessed the land in the manner attributed to Immanuel.

The prophecy therefore cannot properly belong to Hezekiah, to another son of Ahaz, or to a son of Isaiah. It received its literal accomplishment only in Jesus, who was conceived and born of a virgin and who is truly Immanuel—God with us.

Secondly, I shall consider Jeremiah 31:22 as another prophecy concerning the extraordinary conception and birth of the Messiah:

"How long wilt thou go about, O thou backsliding daughter? for the Lord hath created a new thing in the earth, A woman shall compass a man."

—Jeremiah 31:22

That the incarnation of the Messiah is intended here will appear if we consider that the other interpretations offered by both Jewish and Christian writers are weak and unsuitable.

Some understand the words as referring to the appearance of

heroic courage in women, by which they become superior to men.

Others apply them to the unusual practice of women seeking men in marriage, as in Isaiah 4:1.

Others interpret them of the people of Israel returning to God after their apostasy.

But these and similar explanations do not agree with the importance of the language or with the surrounding context.

The context plainly shows that this is a prophecy concerning the Messiah. Several blessings are promised which could be obtained only through Him and which the Jews themselves expected in the days of the Messiah.

—Jeremiah 31:10–14

It is also worthy of notice that the slaughter of the infants at the Messiah's birth is foretold in verse 15, which I shall consider more particularly hereafter.

The purpose of the passage also agrees well with the incarnation of the Messiah. The Jews are being encouraged to return to their own land, and nothing could more effectually persuade them than to remind them that the Messiah was to be born there.

His incarnation was to be extraordinary. He was to be conceived and born of a virgin. This might properly be called a new thing—something unheard of—and a creation, because His human nature would be immediately prepared and formed by the power of the Holy Ghost without the assistance of man.

The expression:

"A woman shall compass a man"

very aptly describes the conception of the Messiah in the womb of the Virgin.

The expression describes the conception and bearing of a male child and points to a conception which would be extraordinary and miraculous. For this reason, it is called:

"A new thing in the earth."

It would be produced by the almighty creative power of God.

Moreover, to whom can the expression a man, or mighty man, be more properly applied than to the Man who is God's Fellow—the promised Messiah?

Some Jewish writers themselves have acknowledged that the

Messiah is intended in this passage and that the woman is to be understood as a virgin.

The Septuagint translation also plainly points in this direction. It renders the words:

"Because the Lord hath created salvation for a new planting."

By this the translators appear to have intended no other than the promised Saviour—the Branch of the Lord's planting, who was to be beautiful and glorious and who would arise in a new, astonishing, and unheard-of manner.

Thirdly, this wonderful mystery of the Messiah's incarnation is represented in Daniel 2:45 by:

"A stone cut out of the mountain without hands."

The Jewish writers acknowledge that the Messiah's kingdom is intended in the preceding verse. What is said of that kingdom agrees perfectly with the kingdom of Jesus.

His kingdom is not of this world but is spiritual. It was established by God Himself and is neither supported nor preserved by human policy or worldly force.

First, it is not unusual in Scripture for a king or kingdom to be represented by a stone. Nor is it uncommon for the Messiah Himself to be described under the same figure.

Thus Jacob says:

"From thence is the shepherd, the stone of Israel."

—Genesis 49:24

This refers to the Messiah, who is both the Shepherd of His flock and the Rock and fortress of His people. As man, He descended from Jacob; and as the God-man, He came from Jacob's God.

Rabbi Saadiah Gaon explains Daniel's prophecy by referring to this passage in Genesis.

The words of the Psalmist also concern the Messiah:

"The stone which the builders refused is become the head stone of the corner."

—Psalm 118:22

Jesus Christ and His apostles expressly apply these words to Him.
—Matthew 21:42; Acts 4:10–11; 1 Peter 2:7

The Jews themselves also acknowledge this interpretation. The

same truth appears in Isaiah:

"Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation."

—Isaiah 28:16

The Targum applies this passage to the Messiah, and Jarchi understands the tried stone to mean the King Messiah.

Secondly, natural generation—particularly when something extraordinary attends it—is sometimes expressed in Scripture by being cut, hewn, or dug out of a rock.

Thus Isaiah says:

"Hearken to me, ye that follow after righteousness, ye that seek the Lord: look unto the rock whence ye are hewn, and to the hole of the pit whence ye are digged.

"Look unto Abraham your father, and unto Sarah that bare you."

—Isaiah 51:1–2

These figurative expressions refer to the birth of Isaac, which was extraordinary because Abraham was one hundred years old and Sarah was ninety when he was born.

A similar expression may also be observed in the words of Moses:

"Of the Rock that begat thee thou art unmindful."

—Deuteronomy 32:18

Thirdly, the expression without hands describes a work accomplished not by human power, but by the power of God. This is the regular meaning of the phrase in the New Testament.

—2 Corinthians 5:1; Colossians 2:11; Hebrews 8:2

When applied to the Messiah, who is represented as a stone cut out of a mountain, it signifies that His incarnation would take place without the agency of man. It would be accomplished in a divine, supernatural, and extraordinary manner.

This was fulfilled in Jesus the Messiah. He was born of a virgin through the overshadowing power of the Holy Ghost.

His conception was an act of God's almighty power and an instance of Christ's wonderful condescension. It also displayed divine wisdom, for God provided a Saviour in our own nature who

entered the world in such a manner that He remained entirely free from the corruption which has infected the whole human race.

For such a High Priest was fitting for us:

"Who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens."

—Hebrews 7:26

CHAPTER 6

Concerning the Place of the Messiah's Birth

The place of the Messiah's birth must now be considered. This was fully determined by prophecy and clearly revealed in Micah 5:2:

"But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting."

In order to place this prophecy in a clear light and show that it concerns the birthplace of the Messiah, as it is cited in the New Testament, I shall consider five things:

1. That the Messiah, and no other person, is intended.

2. That the Jews expected the Messiah to be born at Bethlehem, according to the true meaning of this prophecy.

3. That Jesus was born there.

4. The objections made against applying this prophecy to Jesus, even when it is admitted that the Messiah is intended.

5. The apparent differences between the words as they stand in Micah and their citation by the Evangelist Matthew.

First, I shall prove that the Messiah, and no other person, is intended in this prophecy.

Zerubbabel is the only person, besides the Messiah, to whom it has been applied. But Zerubbabel was not born at Bethlehem. He was born at Babylon, as his name itself indicates.

Nor was he a ruler in Israel, as the Person described in the prophecy was to be. Zerubbabel was indeed governor of Judah and a leader of the returning captives, but he was never ruler over the land of Israel or over the tribes which bore that name.

Still less could it be said of him:

"Whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting."

Grotius understands these words as referring to Zerubbabel's descent from an ancient and distinguished royal family which had

existed for five hundred years.

But this interpretation cannot be admitted. Although Zerubbabel may be said to have existed seminally in the loins of David, as Levi existed in the loins of Abraham, his personal goings forth cannot be said to have taken place five hundred years before his birth.

The phrase is peculiar to the eternal God and properly belongs to the Messiah as a divine Person.

That the Messiah is the only Person intended will appear, first, from the context.

First, that the Messiah is intended appears from the context.

The Person described in the prophecy was to be born after Israel had been brought into a state of distress and humiliation:

> *"They shall smite the judge of Israel with a rod upon the cheek."*
>
> —Micah 5:1

This agrees with the low condition of the Jewish nation at the time of Jesus. They were then subject to the Roman Empire and had no true king of their own.

Yet, from Bethlehem, a Ruler was to arise who would govern Israel. He was not to be an ordinary prince, for His goings forth were:

> *"From of old, from everlasting."*
>
> —Micah 5:2

The following verses also show the greatness of this Person and the nature of His work:

> *"And he shall stand and feed in the strength of the Lord, in the majesty of the name of the Lord his God."*
>
> —Micah 5:4

He was to act as a Shepherd, feeding and governing His people by divine strength and authority.

The prophecy further declares:

> *"And they shall abide: for now shall he be great unto the ends of the earth."*
>
> —Micah 5:4

This cannot properly be said of Zerubbabel or of any ordinary ruler of Israel. Zerubbabel's authority was confined to a small part of

Judea, but the dominion of the Messiah was to extend to the ends of the earth.

The prophecy continues:

"And this man shall be the peace."

—Micah 5:5

This agrees perfectly with the Messiah, who is elsewhere called the Prince of Peace and who was to establish peace between God and His people.

All these circumstances—the humiliation of Israel, the birth of a Ruler at Bethlehem, His eternal goings forth, His pastoral government, the worldwide extent of His greatness, and His being the Author of peace—show that the Messiah, and no other person, is intended.

Secondly, this conclusion is confirmed by the titles and descriptions given to Him.

He is called a Ruler in Israel, which agrees with the Messiah, who was universally expected as a King.

His goings forth are said to have been from old, from everlasting. These words cannot merely describe an ancient human ancestry. They point to His eternal existence as a divine Person before His appearance in human nature.

Jesus therefore truly came forth from Bethlehem as man, while His divine goings forth were from eternity.

Thirdly, many Jewish writers acknowledge that this prophecy belongs to the Messiah. It was certainly understood in this way by the Jews in the time of Jesus, as will appear more fully from what follows.

Secondly, it is evident that the Jews expected the Messiah to be born at Bethlehem.

This appears, first, from several passages in the New Testament which show that this was the generally received opinion among them in the days of Jesus.

When the wise men from the east brought Herod news that the King of the Jews had been born, he was greatly troubled. He therefore assembled the chief priests and scribes and demanded of them where Christ was to be born.

They answered immediately and without hesitation:

"In Bethlehem of Judaea."

—Matthew 2:5

To establish their answer, they cited this very prophecy of Micah:

"And thou Bethlehem, in the land of Juda, art not the least among the princes of Juda: for out of thee shall come a Governor, that shall rule my people Israel."

—Matthew 2:6

This plainly shows both the accepted interpretation of the prophecy within the Jewish church at that time and the place where they expected the Messiah to be born.

Nor was this belief confined to the more learned among the Jews, who were especially familiar with the Law and the Prophets. It was also known among the common people.

Because Jesus had been brought up and had lived in Galilee, they assumed that He had been born there. From this mistaken assumption they believed they had found a strong argument against His being the Messiah:

"Shall Christ come out of Galilee?

"Hath not the scripture said, That Christ cometh of the seed of David, and out of the town of Bethlehem, where David was?"

—John 7:41–42

From what Scripture could they have learned this, except from the prophecy of Micah?

Secondly, the same interpretation appears in the ancient Targums.

In Genesis 35:21, Israel is said to have journeyed and spread his tent beyond the tower of Edar. By comparing this with the preceding verses, it appears that this place was near Bethlehem.

Jonathan's Targum adds that it was:

"The place from which the Messiah shall be revealed in the latter days."

When the tower of Edar is mentioned again in Micah 4:8, the Targumist likewise takes occasion to speak of the Messiah and applies the passage to Him.

Thirdly, later Jewish writers have asserted that the Messiah was born at Bethlehem before the destruction of that place, but has not yet been revealed, being hidden because of their sins and transgressions.

Although this is merely a Talmudic story, it plainly shows what they believed concerning the meaning of this prophecy. It also reveals the universal and constant expectation of their forefathers that the Messiah would be born at Bethlehem.

The author of The Scheme of Literal Prophecy raises several objections against this general expectation of the Jews concerning the place of the Messiah's birth.

First, he objects that, since the time of Jesus, the Jews have regarded the place of the Messiah's birth as a matter of no consequence. They have accepted many persons as Messiahs whom they knew had not been born at Bethlehem.

This need not surprise us. Having rejected the true Messiah, and Bethlehem itself having since been destroyed, they could no longer expect to find this mark of the Messiah in any later claimant.

They therefore set it aside, as they have done with many other marks: that the Messiah should be born before the sceptre departed from Judah, while the second temple was still standing, and that He should arise from the tribe of Judah.

Yet when pressed with these facts, they are forced to return to the Talmudic fiction that the Messiah was born at Bethlehem at the appointed time but remains hidden because of the sins of the people.

This plainly reveals the miserable difficulty and confusion into which their rejection of the true Messiah has brought them.

Secondly, he objects that the Jews in the time of Jesus regarded it as part of the Messiah's character that no one would know where He came from:

> *"Howbeit we know this man whence he is: but when Christ cometh, no man knoweth whence he is."*
>
> —John 7:27

But this does not mean that they were ignorant of the place where the Messiah was to be born. The contrary is evident from the immediate answer given by the chief priests and scribes to Herod, and from the reasoning of the common people who appealed to Micah's prophecy against the claim of Jesus:

> *"Hath not the scripture said, That Christ cometh of the seed of David, and out of the town of Bethlehem, where David was?"*

—John 7:42

Indeed, it is difficult to see how this example can support the author's argument, since it directly opposes his position.

Nor can the words mean that the Jews did not know who the Messiah's remote ancestors would be, for they knew that He was to be the Son of David.

The meaning rather appears to be that they would not know who His father was. He was to be born of a virgin, and His true descent and origin were from above.

Before making this passage an objection against the Messiah's birthplace being revealed in prophecy and known among the ancient Jews, the author should first have answered the explanation which Bishop Chandler has given of John 7:26–27 and has supported with considerable strength.

Thirdly, it is objected that the fifth and sixth verses of this prophecy represent the Person spoken of as acting in a hostile manner against the enemies of Israel. The author of The Scheme of Literal Prophecy therefore claims that these verses are plainly inapplicable both to the peaceful times of the Messiah and to the Person of Jesus.

But these words beautifully represent Him as the Prince of Peace obtaining a glorious victory over all His own enemies and those of His people.

They describe His saving His people out of the hands of their enemies and His mighty conquests through the preaching of the gospel among the Gentiles.

By this means, His people were delivered from ignorance, unbelief, idolatry, and superstition, as well as from the miserable slavery of their own lusts and corruptions.

Fourthly, I shall now prove that Jesus was born at Bethlehem, although in the ordinary course of events this appeared highly improbable.

His mother lived at Nazareth, where He was conceived, and it was therefore most likely that He would also have been born there.

But an all-wise providence, in order to accomplish the ancient prophecy and establish in Him one of the true marks of the Messiah, ordered matters otherwise.

God put it into the heart of Augustus Caesar, the Roman emperor,

to command a taxation or enrolment of the subjects and tributaries of his empire.

This decree required Joseph and Mary to travel from Nazareth to Bethlehem in order to be enrolled with those belonging to their own lineage and family.

While they were there, Mary gave birth to Jesus.

Had she not been compelled by this decree, it is highly unlikely that she would have travelled to Bethlehem when the time of her delivery was so near.

The decree itself appears even more remarkable because there seems to have been no immediate necessity for it, nor is it certain that it was fully carried out throughout the empire. It appears rather to have been ordered especially to bring about this event.

It is still more remarkable that Augustus had determined upon such an enrolment at Tarraco in Spain twenty-seven years before the birth of Christ, but was prevented from carrying it out because of disturbances within the empire.

The enrolment was therefore deferred until this particular time.

Had it been completed on the former occasion, it would probably not have been repeated now, and Joseph and Mary would have had no reason to travel to Bethlehem.

But so it had to be. By infinite wisdom and an all-governing providence, every circumstance was ordered to accomplish the prophecy.

Nor do the Jews themselves deny that Jesus was born at Bethlehem. They acknowledge it even in one of their own blasphemous writings, composed with the purpose of heaping as much reproach as possible upon His name.

Fifthly, I shall proceed to reconcile certain apparent differences between this prophecy as it stands in Micah and as it is cited by the Evangelist Matthew.

Fifthly, I shall reconcile certain apparent differences between this prophecy as it stands in Micah and as it is cited by the Evangelist Matthew. The principal differences are as follows.

First, there appears to be a difference in the name of the place. Micah calls it Bethlehem Ephratah, while Matthew calls it Bethlehem, in the land of Judah.

The reason appears to be that there were two places named Bethlehem: one in the tribe of Zebulun, and the other in the tribe of Judah.

—Joshua 19:15

The latter is sometimes called Bethlehem-judah and sometimes Bethlehem Ephratah.

—Judges 17:7; Ruth 1:2

In order to give Herod a clear answer concerning where the Messiah was to be born, it was proper to distinguish Bethlehem in the tribe of Judah from Bethlehem in the tribe of Zebulun.

This distinction was especially necessary because the Messiah Himself was to arise from the tribe of Judah.

Secondly, there appears to be a more considerable difference in what is said concerning the importance of Bethlehem.

The prophet says that Bethlehem was little among the thousands of Judah, whereas Matthew's citation declares that it was not the least among the princes of Judah.

Yet the difference is not as great as some have represented it. Bethlehem might be little among the thousands of Judah without being absolutely the least of them.

It is true that the difference between Matthew's citation and the Septuagint is greater. According to the Septuagint, Bethlehem was the least, while Matthew says that it was by no means the least.

However, our immediate concern is not to reconcile Matthew's words with the Septuagint, but with the Hebrew text.

The Hebrew may be rendered as a question:

"Art thou the least among the thousands of Judah?"

To this the answer may be supplied according to Matthew:

"No, thou art not the least."

Alternatively, the passage may be understood in this way:

"It is a small thing for thee to be among the thousands of Judah, for out of thee shall come forth unto me a Ruler in Israel."

That is, a far greater honour would be given to Bethlehem: the Messiah would arise from it.

Bethlehem might also be considered little in one respect and not little in another. It was small and insignificant in worldly splendour, wealth, population, and magnificent buildings.

Yet it was not insignificant when considered as the birthplace of Boaz, Jesse, David, and especially the King Messiah.

It might likewise have been little in the days of Micah and yet no longer little in the days of Matthew, since by that time it had received the incomparable honour of being the birthplace of Christ.

Dr Pocock has also shown that the Hebrew word translated little may signify either smallness or greatness—that is, something of considerable note and esteem.

He supports this from the authority of Rabbi Tanchuma, Eben Jannahius, the Chaldee paraphrase on Jeremiah 48:4, and from the Arabic, Syriac, and Septuagint versions of Zechariah 13:7.

Indeed, anyone with even a modest knowledge of Hebrew will recognise that many words in that language may be used in contrary senses. There is no need for me to provide further examples, since the learned author just mentioned has supplied many.

Thirdly, there are several lesser differences which may be reconciled more easily.

What Micah calls the thousands of Judah are called princes in Matthew. The tribes of Israel were divided into thousands, and each thousand had its own prince or ruler. There is therefore a difference in the words, but none in the meaning.

What Micah describes as:

"A ruler in Israel"

Matthew expresses as:

"A Governor, that shall rule my people Israel."

There is no contradiction between these expressions. The word translated rule may also signify feed, and therefore very properly describes the Messiah's pastoral government over His people.

The pronoun unto me, which appears in Micah, is omitted in Matthew. The reason is that Matthew merely records historically the answer given by the chief priests and scribes, whereas in the original prophecy God Himself speaks in His own Person.

I have therefore endeavoured to reconcile the apparent differences between Micah and Matthew.

Even if the differences had been such that they could not be reconciled, the Evangelist could not justly have been charged with perverting or misquoting the prophet. Matthew is not presenting his

own translation, but recording the words used by the chief priests and scribes.

Therefore, however defective their citation might have been, the fault would have belonged to them and not to him. Matthew would still have acted as a faithful historian by transmitting their answer in their own words.

From the whole, it appears that Micah 5:2 is a literal prophecy concerning the place of the Messiah's birth; that it was properly and faithfully cited for this purpose in Matthew 2:6; and that Jesus was born at Bethlehem according to the true meaning of the prophecy.

I do not produce this fact alone as sufficient proof that Jesus is the true Messiah. I know as well as the Jewish objector that hundreds and thousands of people were born at Bethlehem who were not Messiahs and made no claim to be so.

Yet because birth at Bethlehem was one of the distinguishing marks of the Messiah fixed in the Old Testament, and because this mark agrees fully with Jesus, it may properly be joined with the other evidences confirming that He is the true Messiah.

CHAPTER 7

Showing the Circumstances Which Were to Attend or Follow the Messiah's Birth, and How They Were Fulfilled in Jesus

Having considered the place of the Messiah's birth, I now proceed to examine the several circumstances which, according to the prophecies of the Old Testament, were to attend it or follow shortly afterwards. I shall also show how exactly they were fulfilled in Jesus.

The principal circumstances are cited and brought together by the Evangelist Matthew in the second chapter of his Gospel.

First, I shall consider the uncommon and extraordinary appearance of a star in the east at the birth of Jesus, of which we have an account in Matthew 2:2, 9–10.

Although the Evangelist does not expressly refer to any prophecy as being fulfilled by this appearance, I shall endeavour to prove that it had been foretold, that the event agreed with the prophecy, and that the Jews accordingly expected such an appearance at the time of the Messiah's birth.

The prophecy which I understand to point to this circumstance is found in Numbers:

> *"There shall come a Star out of Jacob, and a Sceptre shall rise out of Israel, and shall smite the corners of Moab, and destroy all the children of Sheth."*
>
> —Numbers 24:17

That this is a prophecy concerning the Messiah is acknowledged by many Jewish writers. Both the Targums of Onkelos and Jonathan interpret it of Him, and Aben Ezra says that their Rabbis also explain it of the Messiah.

Nor is there any sufficient reason to understand it otherwise.

That Balaam spoke these words by a prophetic spirit is evident from the preceding verse. It is equally plain from the opening words of the prophecy that he speaks of a Person whom he would see at a great distance in future times:

> *"I shall see him, but not now: I shall behold him, but not nigh."*
>
> —Numbers 24:17

This appears to refer to Him whom every eye shall see when He

comes in the clouds of heaven.

That this Person is the Messiah may also be proved from the title given to Him. He is called a Sceptre—that is, a Sceptre-bearer—whose throne is for ever and ever, and the sceptre of whose kingdom is a right sceptre.

It is also evident from the people from whom He was to arise: He would come out of Jacob and rise out of Israel.

The same conclusion follows from the work He was to perform. He would smite the corners of Moab and deal with all the children of Sheth. These things were never fully accomplished by any other descendant of Jacob.

For this reason, a learned Jewish writer was compelled to confess that Balaam spoke these words concerning the Messiah, whose coming they still awaited so that the prophecy might be fulfilled.

The prophecy has been fulfilled in Jesus. He has spoiled principalities and powers and obtained a complete victory over all His enemies, represented here by the corners of Moab.

He now rules over all the children of men, as Onkelos renders the final clause of the verse. His dominion is from sea to sea and from the river to the ends of the earth.

By the children of Sheth, however, we may more particularly understand the people of God—the Sethites, distinguished from the Cainites. These the Messiah was not to destroy, but to rule over in a special manner.

The word may also signify gathering together, as a hen gathers her chickens beneath her wings. Christ Himself uses this comparison:

> *"How often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings."*
>
> —Matthew 23:37

Having shown that the Messiah is prophesied of in this passage, it is now proper to inquire whether the star mentioned here should be understood as one of His titles or as a sign of His coming.

It must be acknowledged that some ancient Jews regarded the star as one of the Messiah's titles.

For this reason, one who claimed to be the Messiah and was for a time received by the Jews as such was called Bar Kokhba, the Son of a Star, with reference to this prophecy. When he was afterwards

discovered to be an impostor, they called him Bar Koziba, the Son of a Lie.

It may also be with some reference to this prophecy that Jesus is called:

"The bright and morning star."

—Revelation 22:16

Nevertheless, I am more inclined to regard the star mentioned by Balaam as a sign of the Messiah's coming rather than merely as one of His titles.

As there will be a visible sign in the heavens at the second coming of the Son of Man, so there was to be such a sign at His first coming.

The words may therefore be understood in this way:

"When a star shall come forth and direct its course from Jacob, then a sceptre—or Sceptre-bearer—shall rise out of Israel."

Two considerations confirm me in this interpretation.

First, the wise men concluded from the appearance of a star in the east that the King of the Jews had been born, and they therefore travelled to Jerusalem to worship Him.

What could have directed them to observe such a star and draw this particular conclusion from it, except Balaam's prophecy?

The prophecy may have been communicated to them by some means, or it may have remained among the eastern nations from the days of Balaam, who was himself from that region.

Abulpharagius, an Arabic writer, relates that Zoroaster, who lived four or five hundred years before Christ, foretold to his magicians the coming of Christ. He told them that, at the time of His birth, a remarkable star would appear and would shine by day as well as by night.

He therefore commanded them that, when the star appeared, they should follow its direction to the place where the Child would be born, and there offer gifts and worship Him.

According to this account, it was in obedience to that command that the wise men came from the east—that is, from Persia—to worship Christ at Bethlehem.

Supposing this account to be true, it is not difficult to determine where Zoroaster obtained his information.

According to the descriptions given of him, he appears to have

been a Jew both by birth and religion, to have served one of the prophets of Israel, and to have been well acquainted with the sacred writings.

He may therefore reasonably be supposed to have learned these things from Balaam's prophecy and afterwards communicated them to his magicians.

Secondly, the Jews themselves expected a star to appear at the time of the Messiah's coming.

Secondly, the Jews themselves expected such a star to appear at the time of the Messiah's coming.

The book of Zohar says more than once:

"When the Messiah shall be revealed, a bright and shining star shall arise in the east."

What could have led them to this expectation except Balaam's prophecy, which they cite in the same place?

The Gospel account of the star appearing at the birth of Jesus could never have been the foundation of their belief. They would not have shown such respect for the Evangelical history, or for Jesus, as to form their expectations concerning the Messiah from it.

Rather, as they have done in other cases, they would either have suppressed their former generally received beliefs concerning the Messiah or denied the plain facts relating to Jesus.

Their expectation that a star would appear at the Messiah's coming must therefore have arisen from Balaam's prophecy, which received its fulfilment in Jesus.

Secondly, I shall consider another circumstance which was to follow the Messiah's birth. In agreement with ancient prophecy, it was fulfilled in Jesus in the following manner.

Herod instructed the wise men, who had been directed into Judea by the star, that when they had found the young Child and worshipped Him, they should return and report His location.

But God warned them in a dream not to return to Herod, and they departed into their own country by another route.

Immediately afterwards, an angel was sent to Joseph, commanding him to take the young Child and His mother and flee into Egypt. Joseph obeyed.

The Evangelist says that all this occurred:

CHAPTER 7

"That it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Out of Egypt have I called my son."

—Matthew 2:15

The question is therefore which prophecy Matthew refers to, whether it is a prophecy concerning the Messiah, and whether it may properly be applied to Jesus.

Some have supposed that the prophecy is found either in Numbers 23:22 or Numbers 24:8. The more generally received opinion, however, is that Matthew refers to Hosea:

"When Israel was a child, then I loved him, and called my son out of Egypt."

—Hosea 11:1

At first sight, these words appear to refer solely to the deliverance of the people of Israel from Egypt. Various methods have therefore been used to explain their application to the Messiah.

Some regard Matthew's use of them merely as the accommodation of similar words to a similar event. Others understand Israel as a type whose history received a further fulfilment in the Messiah, the Antitype. Others treat the words as a proverbial expression which might be applied to any remarkable deliverance from hardship, misery, and destruction.

It may be granted that Israel was a type of the Messiah and is therefore one of the names given to Him in the Old Testament, particularly in Isaiah 49:3.

There is also a considerable resemblance between Israel's descent into Egypt and deliverance from it, and Christ's descent into and return from that country. The deliverance of Israel from Egypt might also be used proverbially to describe any remarkable rescue from imminent danger.

Nevertheless, I understand Hosea's words in their first, literal, proper, and obvious sense as referring to the Messiah, and to Him alone.

Matthew's evident purpose is to produce direct proofs of Jesus' Messiahship from the Old Testament. Mere allusions, types, allegories, or accommodated phrases would not be sufficient for this purpose.

In order to establish the literal meaning of Hosea's words as referring to the Messiah, the scope of the preceding chapters must be considered.

Their purpose is to set before the people of Israel their many provoking sins and transgressions, so that they might be brought to acknowledge and repent of them. They also declare that, if they did not repent, divine judgments would be executed upon them, ending in the utter ruin of their kingdom and nation.

This account continues to the end of the tenth chapter.

But God, being rich in mercy, remembers mercy in the midst of wrath. For the sake of His own people who were among them, He moderates the sentence. In the eleventh chapter He declares the yearning of His heart toward them and His great affection for them, notwithstanding all their ingratitude.

The true reasons for this kindness are brought together in the opening verse, which may be connected with the closing words of the preceding chapter:

"In a morning shall the king of Israel utterly be cut off."

—Hosea 10:15

The reason is that Israel is a child—that is, a rebellious and disobedient child. Therefore, he would remain many days without a king and without a prince.

Nevertheless, God says:

"I loved him."

He had therefore determined to call His Son out of Egypt. This Son would be compelled to withdraw there for a time, but God would afterwards bring Him out and set Him upon the throne of David His father. He would reign prosperously and execute judgment and justice in the earth.

The words may also be understood as giving the reason for God's merciful treatment of Israel, notwithstanding all the nation's rebellions and the many provocations He had received from them.

Israel is a child: weak and helpless, unable to govern himself; foolish, ignorant, and imprudent, and therefore in need of instruction.

Yet God says:

"I loved him."

Therefore He determined to call—or, according to the prophetic

use of the past tense, He would call—His Son out of Egypt.

Because of Herod's rage and malice, this Son would be compelled to remain there for a time. Yet God would bring Him from Egypt into the land of Judea, where He would be brought up.

There He would assist God's child Israel, instructing him in the precepts of the law and the doctrines of the gospel. At last, through His death, He would obtain the pardon of Israel's transgressions.

For notwithstanding all Israel's ingratitude, which is particularly described in the following verses, God could not entirely cast him away or cease to show compassion toward him:

> *"How shall I give thee up, Ephraim? how shall I deliver thee, Israel? how shall I make thee as Admah? how shall I set thee as Zeboim? mine heart is turned within me, my repentings are kindled together."*
>
> —Hosea 11:8

This appears to be the natural and unforced meaning of the passage. It fully justifies Matthew's citation of it in connection with Jesus' going into Egypt and His return from there.

The words are a literal prophecy of the Messiah and received their exact fulfilment in Jesus.

Thirdly, the next circumstance which followed the birth of Jesus, in fulfilment of ancient prophecy, was the slaughter of the infants at Bethlehem.

The Jews themselves acknowledge that this cruel action took place. Herod, finding that the wise men had not returned to him, became exceedingly angry and ordered all the male children in Bethlehem and the surrounding region, from two years old and under, to be killed.

His command was carried out. The Evangelist then says:

"Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the prophet, saying,

> *"In Rama was there a voice heard, lamentation, and weeping, and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children, and would not be comforted, because they are not."*
>
> —Matthew 2:17–18

The prophecy referred to is found in Jeremiah:

"Thus saith the Lord; A voice was heard in Ramah, lamentation, and bitter weeping; Rachel weeping for her children refused to be comforted for her children, because they were not."

—Jeremiah 31:15

Upon examination, this will appear to be a literal prophecy concerning this event and no other.

It cannot properly be understood of the Babylonian captivity or of the mourning of Jewish women on that account.

First, in so general a calamity as the Babylonian captivity, the mourning must also have been general. It would not have been confined to mothers alone, as it is in this prophecy.

Secondly, there is no reason to suppose that the mourning over the captivity was confined to one particular place, and still less that Ramah was that place. There is no sufficient evidence that the captives were gathered there and mourned over their condition.

Thirdly, the cause of the mourning described by Jeremiah is not captivity but death.

Rachel is represented as weeping for her children, not because they had been carried away, but because:

"They were not."

This expression is frequently used in Scripture to signify death.

—Genesis 37:30; 42:13

Every part of the prophecy, however, agrees with the slaughter of the infants at Bethlehem. Several details both in the text and in the surrounding context confirm this interpretation.

First, the preceding verses plainly speak of the blessings of the Messiah's kingdom and of the joy and comfort which His people would enjoy.

Yet no one should imagine that this dispensation would be entirely free from the ordinary sorrows, distresses, and afflictions of life.

The people of God would sometimes experience distress of conscience because of sin and endure His fatherly chastisements, as appears in verses 18 and 19. They would also suffer bitter persecution from the world.

Indeed, almost as soon as the Messiah was born, Satan began to

display his rage, and one of the most tragic and barbarous actions ever heard of was committed. This is the event expressed in the prophecy now under consideration.

Secondly, the tender and sorrowful mothers mourning over their slaughtered infants in and around Bethlehem might very properly be represented by Rachel.

Bethlehem was the place of Rachel's burial:

"And Rachel died, and was buried in the way to Ephrath, which is Bethlehem."

—Genesis 35:19

Rachel was also distinguished by her intense desire for children. She was therefore a very suitable person to represent tender and affectionate mothers lamenting the deaths of their children.

It may be objected that Bethlehem belonged to the tribe of Judah, where the descendants of Leah, rather than Rachel, lived.

But Ramah was in the tribe of Benjamin, who was Rachel's son. The tribes of Judah and Benjamin bordered upon one another.

This agrees well with the Evangelist's account. Although Bethlehem in Judah was the principal place of this tragic slaughter, the violence was not confined to the town itself but extended throughout all the surrounding region.

The voice of lamentation might therefore properly be said to have been heard in Ramah of Benjamin.

In this way, the Jewish objection against Matthew's citation of the prophecy and its application to Jesus is removed.

Thirdly, the comfort which follows in the prophecy is particularly suitable to the sorrowful mothers. It arises from the hope of a better resurrection:

"Thus saith the Lord; Refrain thy voice from weeping, and thine eyes from tears: for thy work shall be rewarded, saith the Lord; and they shall come again from the land of the enemy.

"And there is hope in thine end, saith the Lord, that thy children shall come again to their own border."

—Jeremiah 31:16–17

The children who had been slain would come again in the resurrection from the land of the enemy—that is, from the grave, for

the last enemy to be destroyed is death.

There was therefore hope concerning their latter end. Their children would rise again and, at the last day, stand upon the very ground where their blood had been shed.

Fourthly, the miraculous conception and birth of the Messiah are predicted in verse 22, as has already been shown in a preceding chapter.

Fifthly, verses 31–34 contain the promise of the new covenant, which belongs particularly to the times of the Messiah, as the Jews themselves acknowledge.

From the whole, therefore, it appears that Jeremiah 31:15 is a literal prophecy concerning the slaughter of the infants at Bethlehem. It was rightly cited by the Evangelist Matthew and properly applied to the event which occurred shortly after the birth of Jesus.

Fourthly, the next circumstance to be considered is Jesus' dwelling in a city called Nazareth. The Evangelist says that by this was fulfilled what had been spoken by the prophets:

"He shall be called a Nazarene."

—Matthew 2:23

The enemies of Christianity greatly triumph over this passage and charge the Evangelist with manifest falsehood, because these precise words cannot be found in the writings of the prophets.

It must be acknowledged that this passage is attended with some apparent difficulties, perhaps greater than those connected with any other prophecy considered in this controversy.

Bishop Kidder has made several observations which considerably lessen these difficulties.

First, the Evangelist does not refer to any single prophet. He says that what was spoken by the prophets was fulfilled. He therefore appears to refer to the general sense of several prophets rather than to the precise words of any one of them.

Secondly, the expression:

"He shall be called a Nazarene"

means no more than that He would be a Nazarene. This is a common use of the Hebrew expression to call.

Therefore, if it can be shown that the prophets taught that the Messiah would be a Nazarene, the Evangelist's application is

sufficiently justified.

Thirdly, Matthew says that this was spoken by the prophets; he does not say that it was written by them.

We are therefore not necessarily required to find these exact words in their surviving writings. The writers of the New Testament record several matters of fact which they had received through reliable tradition and which cannot reasonably be denied.

Among these are the facts that Jannes and Jambres opposed Moses and that Moses exceedingly feared and trembled when the law was given at Mount Sinai.

—2 Timothy 3:8; Hebrews 12:21

I would further observe that the words:

"He shall be called a Nazarene"

appear to be the Evangelist's own explanation rather than a direct quotation from the prophets.

Matthew says that Jesus came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth so that what had been spoken by the prophets might be fulfilled. He does not expressly state the words which the prophets had spoken, though he plainly indicates their general meaning.

They had foretold that the Messiah would be despised, condemned, and reproached by men. This was declared not by one prophet only, but by many.

Matthew then shows that these prophecies were fulfilled by Jesus' dwelling at Nazareth, because He was consequently called a Nazarene—a name given both to Him and to His followers as an expression of contempt and reproach.

Pilate used the title Jesus of Nazareth in this reproachful sense. Philip, on the other hand, used it to show that he was not ashamed to acknowledge Jesus even under one of His most despised titles.

It is also worth observing that Matthew does not use the expression saying in this passage, as he does when quoting direct and explicit prophecies in verses 15 and 17.

Even supposing that the Evangelist had particular passages of the prophets in mind, it is not difficult to identify passages whose meaning agrees with his statement.

Isaiah 11:1 may first be considered. There the Messiah is called Netzer, a Branch:

"And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots."

—Isaiah 11:1

The Targum explains this passage of the Messiah. The word Netzer is also the name from which Nazareth is derived, as David de Pomis observes.

The Messiah is frequently known in the Old Testament by the title the Branch, and the Jewish writers themselves acknowledge this.

Some therefore suppose that this was the particular passage which Matthew had in view.

Jeremiah also says:

"There shall be a day, that the watchmen upon the mount Ephraim shall cry, Arise ye, and let us go up to Zion unto the Lord our God."

—Jeremiah 31:6

The Hebrew word translated watchmen may also be rendered Nazarenes.

The followers of Jesus were well known by this name:

"For we have found this man a pestilent fellow, and a mover of sedition among all the Jews throughout the world, and a ringleader of the sect of the Nazarenes."

—Acts 24:5

Since Jeremiah's passage is a prophecy concerning the means by which the Jews would be restored, this description agrees well with the followers of Jesus.

Rabbi Abarbinel says that the prophet, by the Holy Ghost, foresaw that the Romans would believe in Jesus of Nazareth and would therefore be called Nazarenes after Him.

If the prophets foretold that the followers of the Messiah would be called Nazarenes, then the Messiah Himself must first be called by that name, since they received it from Him.

By some means this had to be brought about, and it was accomplished through His dwelling in the city of Nazareth.

Moreover, Isaiah speaks of Galilee of the nations as the place where the great Light would appear:

"The land of Zebulun, and the land of Naphtali … in Galilee

of the nations.

"The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light."

—Isaiah 9:1–2

By comparing this passage with verse 6, it is evident that it concerns the Messiah.

The city of Nazareth stood within the territory of Zebulun. The prophets therefore indicated not only that the Messiah would dwell in Galilee, but particularly in the region where Nazareth was situated.

This passage will be considered more fully in its proper place.

From the whole, it may therefore be gathered as the general sense of the prophets that the Messiah would be a Nazarene. This received its exact fulfilment in Jesus.

CHAPTER 8

Concerning the Prophetic Office of the Messiah

Having traced the prophecies concerning the Messiah to the very place of His dwelling, we find that they are silent concerning anything further that would happen to Him until the time of His public appearance as the great Prophet in Israel.

The Gospel history is equally silent concerning Jesus during the same period, apart from the single account of His going up to Jerusalem with His parents at the Feast of the Passover, when He was twelve years old, and disputing with the teachers in the temple.

I shall therefore consider Him in this chapter as a Prophet and as exercising the prophetic office.

The following matters will be considered:

1. That the Messiah was to be the Prophet spoken of in Deuteronomy 18:15.

2. Who was to be His forerunner, according to the prophecies of Isaiah and Malachi.

3. His work as a Prophet, in its several parts and branches.

4. The place foretold in prophecy where He was to exercise this office.

5. The success which was to attend His ministry.

First, I shall endeavour to prove from Deuteronomy 18:15 that the Messiah was to be a Prophet:

"The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken."

—Deuteronomy 18:15

The apostle Peter expressly applies these words to Jesus the Messiah.

—Acts 3:22

Christ Himself also appears to refer to this prophecy when He says:

"For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me: for he wrote of me."

—John 5:46

Some understand Moses to be speaking here of a succession of prophets who would be raised up among Israel. Others apply the words to Joshua, Jeremiah, or some other particular prophet.

But the description agrees with none of these so fully as with the Messiah.

The prophet promised here was to be like Moses. This likeness cannot consist merely in being an Israelite or in being raised up from among the people, for these things were common to all the Jewish prophets.

Nor can it refer merely to the possession of the prophetic gift. In that respect, many prophets followed Moses, yet Scripture expressly declares:

"And there arose not a prophet since in Israel like unto Moses, whom the Lord knew face to face,

"In all the signs and the wonders, which the Lord sent him to do."

—Deuteronomy 34:10–11

The Jews have always highly exalted Moses above the other prophets. They call him the prince of the prophets and say that all the prophets prophesied from the fountain of his prophecy.

Maimonides identifies several differences between the manner in which Moses received prophecy and the manner in which the other prophets received it. Yet he allows that the Messiah would be equal to Moses as a prophet.

The same superiority appears in the miracles performed through Moses. Jewish writers have attempted to compare the number of miracles associated with Moses and those associated with all the other prophets, and they acknowledge that the miracles of Moses surpassed them.

It should also be observed that, in the days of Jesus, the Jews expected the appearance of one particular, eminent Prophet. Their expectation must have been founded upon these words of Moses.

When they saw the miracle which Jesus performed in feeding the multitude, they said:

"This is of a truth that prophet that should come into the world."

—John 6:14

It therefore appears that Moses did not intend merely a succession of ordinary prophets, nor any other single prophet besides the Messiah.

This may be shown more fully from the connection of the words with the preceding verse.

Moses had warned Israel against following the practices of the surrounding nations:

"For these nations, which thou shalt possess, hearkened unto observers of times, and unto diviners."

—Deuteronomy 18:14

But Israel was not to depend upon such deceivers. God would raise up true and faithful prophets among them.

Having spoken generally of those prophets, Moses then directed their attention to one eminent and incomparable Prophet, whom God would raise up and who would be like Moses himself.

If a succession of prophets is intended anywhere, it is in the preceding verse. In the present verse, Moses raises their expectation beyond those prophets to the great and excellent Prophet who was to come.

Secondly, this interpretation is confirmed by the needs of the people.

It has been objected that Israel required either an immediate prophet or a continuing succession of prophets, and that their needs could not be answered by the promise of a Prophet who would not appear for many centuries.

But the people were under no such necessity. They had just received a full revelation of God's mind and will through Moses, and this was sufficient until the coming of the Messiah.

The prophets who were afterwards raised up did not bring an entirely new revelation. Their principal work was to enforce, explain, and apply what had already been delivered through Moses.

It was therefore sufficient for the people to know that whenever God should be pleased to make a fuller and more excellent revelation of His will—whether after one, two, three, or four thousand years—He would raise up the great Prophet described in this passage.

God fulfilled this promise in Jesus the Messiah.

Thirdly, that the Messiah is intended may also be proved from the judgment threatened against those who refuse to hear Him:

"And it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken unto my words which he shall speak in my name, I will require it of him."

—Deuteronomy 18:19

The meaning is that God would punish such a person.

The apostle Peter expresses the same warning in stronger terms:

"And it shall come to pass, that every soul, which will not hear that prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people."

—Acts 3:23

Maimonides likewise says that whoever refuses to hear this Prophet is guilty of death by the hand of heaven.

This threatening was never more remarkably fulfilled than in the destruction of the Jewish nation because of its rejection of Jesus as the true Messiah and Prophet of God.

The author of The Scheme of Literal Prophecy objects that this was so far from being fulfilled in Jesus that Jesus Himself was cut off, while His enemies were not.

It is true that Jesus was cut off, as had already been foretold concerning Him, and that He suffered for the sins of His people.

But it is equally certain that those who rejected Him died in their sins, that wrath came upon them to the uttermost, that their city and temple were destroyed, and that their nation was overwhelmed in ruin.

Fourthly, that the Messiah is intended, and that Jesus is that Messiah, appears from the description of this Prophet, which agrees exactly with Him.

Besides the general character of being an Israelite, raised up from among the people and belonging to their own flesh and blood—a description common to all the Jewish prophets—He was to be like Moses in those very respects in which Moses differed from the other prophets.

Moses was a mediator and was faithful in the discharge of his office. In the same way, Jesus is the Mediator of the new covenant and was faithful to Him who appointed Him.

Moses was a mediator and was faithful in the discharge of his work. In the same way, Jesus is the Mediator of the new covenant and

was faithful to Him who appointed Him.

Moses delivered Israel from Egyptian bondage. Jesus has accomplished a far greater deliverance, saving His people from sin, Satan, death, and every spiritual enemy.

Moses performed many signs and wonders in Egypt, at the Red Sea, and in the wilderness. Jesus likewise confirmed His prophetic mission by numerous miracles, and these were greater and more excellent than those performed by Moses.

Moses received the law from God and delivered it to the people. Jesus has given a fuller and clearer revelation of the will of God. He has explained the law in its true spiritual meaning and published the doctrines of grace and salvation.

Moses spoke with God face to face and enjoyed a degree of intimacy with Him beyond that of the other prophets. Jesus possesses an infinitely greater knowledge of God, for He came from the Father and dwelt eternally in His presence:

"No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him."

—John 1:18

Moses was a ruler and leader of Israel. Jesus is both a Prophet and a King, appointed to govern and guide the Israel of God.

Moses was highly honoured by the people, yet he was also rejected by them:

"Who made thee a ruler and a judge?"

—Acts 7:27

Jesus was likewise rejected by His own people, who refused to have Him reign over them.

Moses fasted for forty days and forty nights. Jesus also fasted for forty days and forty nights before entering publicly upon His ministry.

Moses established ordinances for the worship of God. Jesus instituted the ordinances of the New Testament and appointed His apostles to teach all nations.

In these and many other respects, Jesus was truly like Moses. Yet He was far superior to him, for Moses was faithful as a servant in God's house, but Christ is faithful as a Son over His own house.

—Hebrews 3:5–6

I proceed, secondly, to inquire who was to be the forerunner of this great Prophet, according to the prophecies of Isaiah and Malachi. I shall endeavour to prove that John the Baptist is the Person intended.

Secondly, I shall inquire who was to be the forerunner of this great Prophet, according to the prophecies of Isaiah and Malachi. I shall endeavour to prove that John the Baptist is the Person intended.

First, this forerunner is described as:

"The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God."

—Isaiah 40:3

Malachi likewise records the promise:

"Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me."

—Malachi 3:1

These prophecies are applied to John the Baptist in the New Testament.

—Matthew 3:3; Mark 1:2–3; Luke 3:4

The justice of this application will readily appear.

The very place where John began his ministry was foretold. He came preaching in the wilderness of Judea.

The work assigned to the promised messenger also agrees exactly with him. He was to prepare the way of the Lord, and John's ministry had a direct tendency to prepare the people to receive the Messiah.

He preached the doctrine of repentance, which the Jews themselves acknowledged to be necessary before the coming of the Messiah.

He declared that the kingdom of heaven—the kingdom of the Messiah—was at hand.

He also baptised with the baptism of repentance. This caused the Jews to inquire whether he might be the Christ, Elijah, or that Prophet.

At the same time, John directed the people away from himself and advised them to believe in the One who would come after him—that is, in Christ Jesus.

—Acts 19:4

He also sought to remove the Jews' vain confidence in their

natural privileges as descendants of Abraham.

In this way, he fulfilled Isaiah's further description of his ministry:

"Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low: and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough places plain."

—Isaiah 40:4

Through his preaching, proud hearts were humbled, the discouraged were raised, crooked ways were corrected, and rough dispositions were prepared to receive the Messiah.

Indeed, John did more than announce that the Messiah was near. He pointed Him out, as it were, with his finger:

"Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world."

—John 1:29

That the Lord whose way was to be prepared is the Messiah, and that the prophecy belongs to the time of His appearance, may easily be concluded from the context.

The consolations which God's ministers were commanded to proclaim to His people were to receive their fullest accomplishment in the days of the Messiah, as Kimchi observes upon the passage.

—Isaiah 40:1–2

The Messiah is more expressly described in verses 9–11 as One whose appearing would bring joy to His people, who would come with a strong hand, vigorously carry out His purposes, faithfully complete His work, and afterwards receive His full reward.

He is also represented as a Shepherd who would tenderly perform every part of that office:

"He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom."

—Isaiah 40:11

This character is frequently given to the Messiah in the Old Testament and is expressly claimed by Jesus in the New.

Secondly, the Person who was to be the forerunner of the Messiah is spoken of under the name of Elijah the prophet:

"Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming

of the great and dreadful day of the Lord:

"And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse."

—Malachi 4:5–6

All this agrees well with John the Baptist.

That he is the Person intended may first be argued from the time of his coming. He appeared before the great and dreadful—or, as the Septuagint renders it, illustrious—day of the Lord.

It may also be proved from the work he was to perform. He was to turn the hearts of the fathers to, or rather with, the children, as Kimchi observes upon the passage.

The meaning is that he would be the instrument of converting many people, both fathers and children, from their iniquities.

This was fulfilled in the ministry of John the Baptist:

"Then went out to him Jerusalem, and all Judaea, and all the region round about Jordan,

"And were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins."

—Matthew 3:5–6

It also deserves notice that this Person was to enforce his ministry with the solemn warning:

"Lest I come and smite the earth with a curse."

This refers to the destruction of the Jewish nation if they refused to repent, and it agrees exactly with the preaching of John the Baptist.

He declared to the Jews that unless they brought forth fruits suitable to repentance, divine wrath would come upon them. The axe was already laid to the root of the trees, and every tree which did not produce good fruit would be cut down and cast into the fire.

Accordingly, because they did not repent, because they despised John's ministry, and because they rejected the Messiah, this wrath came upon them.

Their land was struck with a curse, their city and temple were destroyed, and they ceased to exist as a nation and commonwealth.

Two principal objections have been raised against understanding this prophecy of John the Baptist.

First, it is argued that Elijah himself is intended. The Septuagint translators expressly render the words Elijah the Tishbite, and the Jews accordingly expect Elijah to return in person.

The Septuagint translation, however, carries no authority in this matter. The word Tishbite is not found in the original text but was inserted by the translators without warrant.

It is true that many Jews believed Elijah would personally return before the Messiah. Yet this was not the opinion of them all.

Some understood the prophecy to mean that a great prophet, equal to Elijah and endowed with the same spirit, would appear. Maimonides in particular held this opinion.

Besides, it is not unusual for one person to be called by the name of another whom he closely resembles.

Writers outside Scripture use the same manner of speaking. Virgil, for example, calls Turnus another Achilles because of the similarity between them in courage and other qualities.

Such language is still more common in Scripture. The Messiah is frequently called David because of the remarkable likeness and agreement between them.

The Jews themselves also call Phinehas by the name Elijah because of his great zeal for the Lord of hosts.

For the same reason, John the Baptist might properly be called Elijah. There was a striking resemblance between them in their temper and disposition, their manner of clothing, their austere way of life, their eminent piety and holiness, their courage and faithfulness in reproving sin, and their zeal and usefulness in the cause of God and true religion.

John might therefore truly be said to come:

"In the spirit and power of Elias."

—Luke 1:17

On this account, he might properly be called by Elijah's name.

A second objection, which appears more considerable, is that John must have known who he was, yet when he was asked whether he was Elijah, he denied that he was:

"And they asked him, What then? Art thou Elias? And he saith, I am not."

—John 1:21

In answer, it should be observed that the Jews were asking whether John was Elijah in person—the actual Elijah, Elijah the Tishbite.

John understood their question in that sense and therefore answered honestly that he was not. He was not Elijah the Tishbite.

Yet he did not deny that he was the Person intended by the Elijah whose coming had been foretold.

So that they might not remain uncertain concerning who he was, he immediately declared:

"I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord, as said the prophet Esaias."

—John 1:23

This is the same Person whom Malachi calls the Lord's messenger, who would prepare His way before Him. That messenger is none other than the Elijah promised at the close of Malachi's prophecy.

Although John denied that he was Elijah the Tishbite, he acknowledged that he was the Person represented by the promised Elijah.

Therefore, when Christ says of John:

"This is Elias, which was for to come,"

—Matthew 11:14

there is nothing contrary to or irreconcilable with John's own words.

Christ does not say that John was Elijah in person or Elijah the Tishbite. He says that John was the Elijah who was to come—that is, the Person intended by the prophecy.

Thirdly, I shall now consider the work which the Messiah was to perform as a Prophet, and which Jesus accomplished.

Thirdly, I shall consider the work which the Messiah was to perform as a Prophet, and which Jesus accomplished.

First, one part of the Messiah's prophetic work was to preach the gospel, according to Isaiah:

"The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek."

—Isaiah 61:1

Some Jewish writers acknowledge that this prophecy belongs to the Messiah.

Indeed, the anointing of the Spirit spoken of here agrees most properly with Him who was:

"Anointed with the oil of gladness above his fellows."

—Psalm 45:7

The work described also agrees with the Messiah, particularly the binding up of the broken-hearted, which no mere creature could accomplish by his own power.

Jesus began His public ministry with this prophecy. He read it in the synagogue and directly applied it to Himself:

"This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears."

—Luke 4:21

He answered every part of the description contained within it, which provides considerable evidence that He is the Messiah.

When John sent his disciples to ask Jesus whether He was the One who should come or whether they should look for another, Jesus included this among the evidences of His Messiahship:

"The poor have the gospel preached to them."

—Matthew 11:5

As the Messiah was to preach good tidings to the meek—or to the poor, as the Septuagint renders the words—so it is evident that the hearers of Jesus were chiefly people of that condition.

They gathered around Him, attended upon His ministry, and received His doctrine, while He was commonly rejected by the wise, powerful, and wealthy.

Moreover, the gospel was preached by Jesus in a manner unlike that of any other teacher, either before or since.

Even His enemies were compelled to confess:

"Never man spake like this man."

—John 7:46

His words were clothed with majesty and power. He taught as One possessing authority, and not as the scribes, to the astonishment of all who heard Him.

Secondly, another part of the Messiah's prophetic work was to

perform miracles in confirmation of the truth of His mission.

That the Messiah was to work miracles is evident from the predictions of the prophets, particularly Isaiah:

"Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped.

"Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing."

—Isaiah 35:5–6

These things were to occur when God came with vengeance and recompence to save His people. This must be understood of the great salvation to be accomplished by the Messiah.

All these predictions were fulfilled in Jesus.

When John's disciples were sent to ask Him whether He was the One who should come, Jesus referred them to these very works as evidence that He was the true Messiah:

"The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear."

—Matthew 11:5

That the Jews in the days of Jesus expected the Messiah to perform miracles is evident from their own words:

"When Christ cometh, will he do more miracles than these which this man hath done?"

—John 7:31

Their question shows that they regarded the working of miracles as one of the recognised marks of the Messiah.

Jesus performed miracles of every kind. He gave sight to the blind, hearing to the deaf, speech to the dumb, strength to the lame, and cleansing to lepers.

He healed all kinds of sickness and disease, cast out devils, calmed the winds and the sea, fed great multitudes with a small quantity of food, and raised the dead.

These works were performed openly before great numbers of people, including His enemies. They were therefore not secret actions or inventions which could easily be concealed or denied.

Even His adversaries did not generally deny that He performed extraordinary works. Instead, they attempted to attribute them to

the power of the devil.

But this charge was both unreasonable and contradictory. Satan would not assist in destroying his own kingdom, casting out his own servants, and establishing the authority and doctrine of the Messiah.

The miracles of Jesus therefore gave clear and sufficient confirmation that He had been sent by God and that He was the promised Messiah and Prophet.

Thirdly, another part of a prophet's work is to foretell future events.

Maimonides lays down this rule: if everything which a prophet foretells comes to pass, he is to be regarded as a true and faithful prophet.

Jesus foretold many things beforehand which afterwards received their exact and complete fulfilment.

He foretold the cruel treatment He would receive from the Jews; that He would be betrayed by one of His own disciples, denied by another, and forsaken by them all.

He foretold His death and the manner in which it would take place, together with His resurrection from the dead.

He also foretold the destruction of the Jewish nation, the preaching of the gospel throughout the Gentile world, and the success which would attend it.

All these things were exactly accomplished.

Jesus therefore rightly deserves the character of a Prophet and ought to be received as One sent by God.

Fourthly, I shall now inquire into the place where the Messiah was chiefly to exercise His ministry as the great Prophet in Israel.

This appears from the prophecy in Isaiah:

"Nevertheless the dimness shall not be such as was in her vexation, when at the first he lightly afflicted the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, and afterward did more grievously afflict her by the way of the sea, beyond Jordan, in Galilee of the nations.

> *"The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined."*
>
> —Isaiah 9:1–2

The first verse may be more clearly understood in this way:

Nevertheless, the darkness shall not remain upon her as it did in the time of her former distress. As God formerly brought the lands of Zebulun and Naphtali into contempt, so afterwards He would make them glorious—by the way of the sea, beyond Jordan, in Galilee of the nations.

The meaning is that the same region which had formerly suffered humiliation and affliction would afterwards receive remarkable honour through the appearance and ministry of the Messiah.

Mede reads the words in much the same way. Their plain meaning is this: the parts of the land of Israel here mentioned had suffered greatly under Tiglath-pileser, who carried their inhabitants captive.

—2 Kings 15:29

This was the former distress referred to by the prophet.

Yet those same regions would afterwards be greatly honoured and glorified by the presence and ministry of the Messiah. He is the great Light who was to shine in those dark and obscure places, giving light to their inhabitants and making both Himself and the region famous through His doctrine, miracles, and holy life.

He is none other than the Child born and the Son given, of whom such great things are spoken and to whom such magnificent titles are given later in the chapter.

—Isaiah 9:6–7

This prediction was exactly fulfilled in Jesus.

Although He was born at Bethlehem in the land of Judah, according to Micah's prophecy, He was brought up in Galilee. From there He came to be baptised by John when the time approached for Him to enter upon His public ministry.

After He had been tempted in the wilderness and heard that John had been imprisoned, He returned into Galilee.

Leaving Nazareth, He came and lived at Capernaum, which was by the sea, within the borders of Zebulun and Naphtali:

"That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying,

"The land of Zabulon, and the land of Nephthalim, by the way of the sea, beyond Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles;

"*The people which sat in darkness saw great light.*"

—Matthew 4:14–16

It was there that Jesus began to preach.

—Matthew 4:17

There He called His first disciples.

—Matthew 4:18–22

There He remained for a considerable time, travelling throughout Galilee, teaching in its synagogues, preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every kind of sickness and disease among the people.

—Matthew 4:23

There He performed His first miracle.

—John 2:11

Galilee was the principal place of His ministry and ordinary conversation. Before His death, He promised that after His resurrection He would meet His disciples there, and He fulfilled that promise.

—Matthew 26:32; 28:7, 10, 16

Jesus spent so much time in Galilee that the Jews wrongly concluded that it was the place of His birth:

"Shall Christ come out of Galilee?"

—John 7:41

Although He was not to be born there, prophecy had determined that He would live and minister there extensively.

The ancient Jews themselves expected the Messiah to be revealed and make His first public appearance in Galilee, as they affirm in the book of Zohar.

What foundation could there have been for such an expectation except this prophecy of Isaiah, which received its literal accomplishment in Jesus?

Fifthly, I shall now consider the success which was to attend the Messiah's ministry.

Fifthly, I shall consider the success which was to attend the Messiah's ministry.

This success, as to the number of those who would receive Him, was to be small and seemingly insignificant. Both He and His ministry were to be slighted and rejected by men, according to the prophecies which had gone before concerning Him.

Those prophecies declared that, instead of being converted under His ministry, the hearts of many would become more hardened, their ears heavy, and their eyes closed.

This was not owing to any weakness or insufficiency in His doctrine or in His manner of teaching, but to the miserable depravity and corruption of human nature.

So it proved under the ministry of Jesus.

Although He spoke as no other man had spoken, taught with authority and not as the scribes, and confirmed His doctrine by many astonishing and unquestionable miracles, yet comparatively few believed in Him.

Their minds were blinded and their hearts hardened.

So that this might not become a cause of stumbling to His disciples, Jesus informed them that it was no more than what had been foretold:

"Therefore speak I to them in parables: because they seeing see not; and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand.

"And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias."

—Matthew 13:13–14

"But though he had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not on him:

"That the saying of Esaias the prophet might be fulfilled."

—John 12:37–38

The prophecy to which He particularly referred is found in Isaiah:

"Go, and tell this people, Hear ye indeed, but understand not; and see ye indeed, but perceive not.

"Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes."

—Isaiah 6:9–10

A later author asserts that, according to its literal meaning, this prophecy concerned only the obstinate Jews who lived in Isaiah's time, although Jesus applied it to those to whom He spoke in parables.

But there is no sufficient reason why its literal meaning should not refer as fully to the Jews in the days of Jesus as to those in the days of Isaiah.

The Jews in the time of Jesus possessed much the same character

as those who lived in Isaiah's day. Indeed, the description agrees even more fully with them.

Although this judicial blindness began in Isaiah's time, it increased through succeeding generations and had reached an extraordinary degree by the time of Jesus. It continued to increase until the final destruction of the nation.

That it was to continue until then appears from the prophet's question:

"Then said I, Lord, how long?"

—Isaiah 6:11

The answer was:

"Until the cities be wasted without inhabitant, and the houses without man, and the land be utterly desolate,

"And the Lord have removed men far away, and there be a great forsaking in the midst of the land."

—Isaiah 6:11–12

This cannot properly refer either to the devastation caused by Sennacherib or to the Babylonian captivity. In neither case was the land of Judea so completely desolated as the prophecy describes.

It plainly points instead to the destruction of the Jewish temple, city, and nation by the Romans, which was the just consequence of their blindness, obstinacy, and unbelief.

Besides, Isaiah appears principally to have had the Jews living in the days of the Messiah in view. He spoke these things concerning them when he saw the Messiah's glory and spoke of Him, as the Evangelist expressly declares.

—John 12:41

CHAPTER 9

Concerning the Remarkable Event of the Messiah's Riding into Jerusalem upon an Ass

Having traced the prophecies concerning the Messiah to His entrance upon and discharge of the prophetic office, I cannot proceed further without considering a remarkable event which was to occur toward the close of His ministry: His riding into Jerusalem upon an ass.

That Jesus did so shortly before His death is confirmed not only by the Evangelists, whose testimony is worthy of belief, but also by the Jews themselves, His declared and implacable enemies.

By this action, an ancient prophecy was fulfilled, as the Evangelists observe.

—Matthew 21:4–5; John 12:14–16

The prophecy is found in Zechariah:

> *"Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy King cometh unto thee: he is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass."*

—Zechariah 9:9

I shall endeavour to prove that this prophecy, in its primary, obvious, and literal sense, refers to the Messiah and to no other person, and that it was therefore properly applied to Jesus.

Some have understood Zerubbabel to be intended; others, Nehemiah; and others, Judas Maccabaeus.

But none of these men was a king. Neither were they distinguished by the poverty and lowliness described here, nor is it recorded that any of them rode into Zion, or Jerusalem, upon an ass in such a public manner and accompanied by such demonstrations of joy.

Since no other suitable person has been proposed, the Messiah must be intended.

All the descriptions within the prophecy agree exactly with Him. He is frequently represented in the Old Testament as a King, and particularly as Zion's King; as One who would execute judgment and righteousness in the earth; as the Saviour of His people; and as the Prince of Peace.

Several Jewish writers also understand this prophecy as referring to the Messiah.

It is certain that the Jews in the days of Jesus understood it in this way. This is evident from their behaviour toward Him.

When they saw Him approaching Jerusalem upon an ass, they spread their garments and branches of trees along the road and cried:

"Hosanna to the Son of David."

"Blessed be the King of Israel that cometh in the name of the Lord."

Their actions show that they regarded Zechariah's words as a prophecy concerning the Messiah and concluded from this circumstance that Jesus was He.

Otherwise, they would never have received Him with such acclamations or addressed Him by such magnificent titles.

Indeed, there is nothing in the prophecy, as it concerns the Messiah, which does not fully agree with Jesus.

First, the Person described is a King:

"Behold, thy King cometh unto thee."

—Zechariah 9:9

This agrees perfectly with Jesus, who was born King of the Jews and was publicly acknowledged under that title.

The wise men from the east inquired:

"Where is he that is born King of the Jews?"

—Matthew 2:2

Nathanael confessed Him to be the King of Israel, and the people used the same title when He entered Jerusalem. Even the inscription placed above Him at His crucifixion declared Him to be the King of the Jews.

He is particularly called Zion's King, because He rules over the church and people of God. His kingdom is not of this world, nor is it established by worldly power, but it is spiritual and everlasting.

Secondly, this King is described as just:

"He is just."

This character belongs fully to Jesus. He was righteous in His nature, entirely free from sin, and perfectly holy in every part of His life and conduct.

He faithfully discharged every office entrusted to Him. He fulfilled all righteousness, obeyed the law of God perfectly, and suffered the just for the unjust.

He also governs His kingdom with righteousness:

"A sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom."

—Hebrews 1:8

Thirdly, He is described as having salvation.

The Hebrew words may be rendered as meaning that He is saved, victorious, or endowed with salvation. Each sense agrees with Jesus.

He was preserved and delivered from death through His resurrection. Having conquered sin, Satan, death, and the grave, He entered into His glory as a victorious King.

He also possesses salvation for His people. Salvation is placed in Him, accomplished by Him, and freely bestowed through Him.

He is therefore properly called:

"A Saviour, and a great one."

—Isaiah 19:20

The joyful cry of the people when He entered Jerusalem was therefore highly suitable:

"Hosanna,"

which signifies, "Save now."

Fourthly, this King is described as lowly:

"Lowly, and riding upon an ass."

The Hebrew word may signify poor, afflicted, humble, or meek. Each meaning agrees exactly with Jesus.

He was born of poor parents and brought up in a humble and obscure condition. During His public life, He continued in outward poverty. He had nowhere to lay His head and was supported by certain women who ministered to Him from their substance.

When He died, He possessed nothing to leave to His mother, but entrusted her to the care of one of His disciples.

If the word is rendered meek or lowly, it still agrees perfectly with Him. His unparalleled meekness and humility appeared in His assumption of human nature, in His gracious conduct toward those far beneath Him—even publicans and sinners—and in His service to His own disciples.

This was displayed especially when He washed their feet, setting before them an example and teaching them to learn from Him, for He is meek and lowly in heart.

Fifthly, this Person is further described as riding upon an ass:

"Lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass."

—Zechariah 9:9

The Jews themselves expected the Messiah to appear in this manner. Jesus did so, as the Evangelists testify and as the Jews themselves acknowledge.

Sixthly, this Person was to remove the instruments of war and speak peace to the nations:

"And I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim, and the horse from Jerusalem, and the battle bow shall be cut off: and he shall speak peace unto the heathen."

—Zechariah 9:10

This was exactly fulfilled in Jesus. Having made peace through the blood of His cross, He caused it to be preached by His ministers both to Jews and Gentiles.

His gospel is the gospel of peace, His kingdom is a kingdom of peace, and He Himself is the Prince of Peace.

Seventhly, His kingdom was to be exceedingly extensive:

"And his dominion shall be from sea even to sea, and from the river even to the ends of the earth."

—Zechariah 9:10

Jarchi gives this as the reason why the prophecy cannot be understood of anyone other than the Messiah.

Of the increase of His government and peace there shall be no end. This will appear still more clearly when the kingdoms of this world visibly become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ.

Eighthly, the coming of this Person is represented as something remarkable and extraordinary, and as an occasion of great joy to Zion.

For this reason, the word behold is placed before it, and Zion is called to rejoice greatly and shout.

All this was literally fulfilled when Jesus entered Jerusalem. The

whole city was moved and astonished at His unusual appearance.

The people accompanied Him with joyful acclamations, crying: "Hosanna to the Son of David."

From the whole, therefore, it appears that Zechariah 9:9 is another literal prophecy concerning the Messiah and that it received its exact fulfilment in Jesus.

CHAPTER 10

Concerning the Sufferings of the Messiah

The writers of the New Testament, while giving an account of the sufferings of Jesus, continually appeal to the books of the Old Testament as containing prophecies concerning the sufferings of the Messiah.

From these Scriptures, the apostles reasoned with the Jews:

"Opening and alleging, that Christ must needs have suffered, and risen again from the dead."

—Acts 17:3

Christ Himself declared that His sufferings had been foretold by the prophets:

"The Son of man goeth as it is written of him."

—Matthew 26:24

After His resurrection, He reproved His disciples for their slowness to believe all that the prophets had spoken:

"O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken:

"Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?"

—Luke 24:25–26

He then began with Moses and all the prophets and explained to them the things concerning Himself.

The sufferings of the Messiah were therefore not unforeseen events, nor were they contrary to His true character and office. They had been determined by God and plainly revealed beforehand in the prophetic writings.

The Jews, however, were greatly prejudiced against the idea of a suffering Messiah. They expected Him to appear only as a glorious and victorious prince who would deliver them from temporal bondage and establish an earthly kingdom.

Yet the prophets speak no less clearly of His humiliation and sufferings than of His glory and exaltation.

In examining this subject, I shall proceed in the following

manner:

First, I shall consider two remarkable prophecies which speak fully of the Messiah's sufferings—Psalm 22 and Isaiah 53.

Secondly, I shall consider the particular parts and circumstances of those sufferings as foretold in other prophecies and show how they were fulfilled in Jesus.

First, I shall consider Psalm 22 and endeavour to prove that it concerns the Messiah and received its accomplishment in Jesus.

First, Psalm 22 is commonly understood by Christian interpreters to be a prophecy concerning the sufferings of the Messiah. Indeed, it cannot with any reasonable appearance of truth be applied to anyone else.

The entire course and connection of the Psalm plainly show that one particular person is spoken of throughout. The whole Jewish nation, or congregation of Israel, cannot therefore be intended.

The Person described is distinguished from the lowest and most contemptible part of the people, by whom He was reproached and mocked.

—Psalm 22:6–8

He is also distinguished from those whom He calls His brethren, from the congregation, and from those who fear the Lord, before whom He would praise God.

—Psalm 22:22–23

As one particular Person is intended, so He is clearly represented as a suffering Person.

He is forsaken by God, despised by men, and surrounded by enemies. They cruelly torment Him, His bones are dislocated, His hands and feet are pierced, and He is brought down to the dust of death.

This single suffering Person can be none other than the Messiah.

Some Jewish writers have attempted to apply the Psalm to Esther. Yet there is not one sentence or even a single expression in the whole Psalm which can reasonably be applied to her.

Others, with somewhat greater appearance of truth, understand David to be intended.

There are, however, several things in the Psalm which, in their plain, obvious, and literal meaning, cannot be applied to David.

Wicked men are described as shooting out the lip, shaking the head, and using the very words recorded in verse 8:

"He trusted on the Lord that he would deliver him: let him deliver him, seeing he delighted in him."

—Psalm 22:8

His joints are dislocated.

—Psalm 22:14

His hands and feet are pierced.

—Psalm 22:16

His garments are divided, and lots are cast upon His clothing.

—Psalm 22:18

None of these things was true of David. They were to be accomplished in the Messiah and received their full and literal fulfilment in Jesus, as will be shown more particularly hereafter.

That the Messiah is intended may also be gathered from the title of the Psalm:

"Upon Aijeleth Shahar."

This refers to the subject of the Psalm and may be rendered the Hind of the Morning. The expression agrees well with the Messiah and may describe His swiftness and readiness to appear for the salvation of His people.

It also agrees with Jesus, who in the very morning of His infancy was hunted by Herod and his agents, who sought to take away His life.

Others render the title the Morning Star, which is one of the titles of Jesus:

"I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star."

—Revelation 22:16

The Targum interprets it as referring to the daily morning sacrifice. That sacrifice was a type of the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world and is therefore appropriately mentioned at the beginning of this Psalm.

The daily morning sacrifice was a type of the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. It is therefore appropriately

mentioned at the beginning of a Psalm in which the sufferings of the Messiah are so particularly described, since those sufferings were to be a propitiatory sacrifice for the sins of men.

Moreover, the happiness of God's people was deeply connected with the Person described in this Psalm. Through His sufferings, the meek were to be satisfied and brought to the enjoyment of eternal life. They are therefore called upon to praise the Lord:

> *"The meek shall eat and be satisfied: they shall praise the Lord that seek him: your heart shall live for ever."*
>
> —Psalm 22:26

The conversion of the Gentiles through the preaching of the gospel was also to follow His sufferings—an event which belongs particularly to the days of the Messiah:

"All the ends of the world shall remember and turn unto the Lord: and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before thee."

—Psalm 22:27

Even some Jewish writers have been compelled to apply parts of this Psalm to the Messiah, plainly recognising that they could not reasonably be understood of any other person.

Secondly, Isaiah 53 is another prophecy which Christian interpreters generally understand as referring to the Messiah and His sufferings.

Modern Jewish writers, finding that the prophecy does not agree with their present notions of the Messiah, have attempted to substitute various other persons as its subject.

It would be both tedious and unnecessary to list all the different interpretations they have proposed. Some apply it to Abraham, others to Moses, Ezra, Zerubbabel, or to any righteous person in general.

These interpretations contradict one another and reveal the miserable uncertainty into which they have fallen since abandoning the true, plain, obvious, and anciently received meaning of the passage.

There is no foundation anywhere in the prophecy for applying it to any of these persons, and such interpretations therefore require no further consideration.

The principal opinions now maintained among them are that the prophecy refers either to the people of Israel collectively or to Josiah

or Jeremiah individually.

Yet in each case they contradict their own Targum, Talmud, and other ancient Jewish writings.

The ancient Jewish writers, however, understood this prophecy as referring to the Messiah.

The Targum of Jonathan begins the passage:

"Behold, my servant the Messiah shall prosper."

Several passages in the Talmud and other ancient Jewish writings are also applied to the Messiah. This shows that the Messianic interpretation was not invented by Christians but was received among the Jews themselves.

The opinion that the people of Israel collectively are intended cannot be maintained.

Throughout the prophecy, the suffering Person is plainly distinguished from the people for whose sins He suffers:

"For the transgression of my people was he stricken."

—Isaiah 53:8

The people cannot be both the sufferer and those for whose transgressions He was stricken.

Moreover, the Person described is entirely innocent:

"He had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth."

—Isaiah 53:9

This cannot properly be said of the nation of Israel. The prophets repeatedly charge that people with rebellion, idolatry, unbelief, and many other sins.

The prophecy also declares that this Person suffered voluntarily and patiently:

"He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth."

—Isaiah 53:7

The Jewish nation did not bear its afflictions with this perfect patience and submission. Its history contains frequent complaints, rebellions, and attempts to escape its sufferings.

Nor can it be said that Israel suffered as an atoning sacrifice for the sins of others:

"He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities."

—Isaiah 53:5

"The Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all."

—Isaiah 53:6

"Thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin."

—Isaiah 53:10

The sufferings of Israel have never made reconciliation for the sins of the Gentiles or obtained their pardon before God.

The Person described was also to die, be buried, rise again, see His seed, prolong His days, and afterwards be highly exalted. These things cannot properly be applied to the Jewish nation collectively.

It is therefore impossible that Israel as a people should be the servant intended in this prophecy.

Abarbinel would have King Josiah intended, who was slain by Pharaoh Necho at Megiddo.

He supposes that the report mentioned in the opening verse is the report of Josiah's death, which no one would believe because of his celebrated piety.

He further argues that Josiah is said to have grown up as a tender plant because of his early devotion and the great progress he made in religion. He was despised because he was killed by Necho, whom Abarbinel regards as a contemptible man. He was a man of sorrows because he was frequently ill and troubled with gout.

According to this interpretation, Josiah bore the griefs of the people because the sins of the nation occasioned his death. The words:

"All we like sheep have gone astray"

are taken as evidence that the people were not greatly devoted to the law during his reign. It is then supposed that God avenged Josiah's death upon many nations.

But Abarbinel contradicts himself, for elsewhere he joins other Jewish writers in applying the prophecy to the people of Israel rather than to Josiah.

Moreover, some of the things asserted concerning Josiah are true, while others are plainly false and entirely unsupported.

It is true that Josiah was a very godly prince and devoted himself to religion from an early age.

But it is false that the people were not greatly devoted to the law during his reign. It was then that the book of the law was found, the covenant between God and the people was renewed, a general reformation was accomplished, and a Passover was kept such as had not been observed since the days of the judges.

It is also false that the sins of the people caused Josiah's death. His death resulted rather from his own rashness in involving himself in a matter to which he had received no proper call.

Nor did God avenge his death upon many nations.

Pharaoh Necho, by whom Josiah was slain, was not a contemptible person, but a powerful and considerable prince.

There is equally no evidence that no one would believe the report of Josiah's death, or that he was a sickly man afflicted with gout.

But these matters may be passed over, since there are many things in the prophecy which cannot possibly agree with Josiah.

It is said of the suffering Person that He had done no violence. The contrary appears in Josiah's conduct toward Pharaoh Necho.

It is said that He bore the sins of others, died for them, and made His soul an offering for sin.

His days were to be prolonged, and the pleasure of the Lord was to prosper in His hand.

Still less could it properly be asked concerning Josiah:

"Who shall declare his generation?"

Others would have Jeremiah intended. Grotius follows this interpretation, and the author of The Scheme of Literal Prophecy appears inclined toward it.

But the descriptions given of the Person in this prophecy cannot agree with Jeremiah.

The Person described is entirely free from guilt and sin and had never gone astray like other men.

He was to suffer for the sins of others, bear those sufferings with perfect patience, and even intercede for the transgressors who caused them.

Although He would be cut off and die, He would live again, possess a great number of disciples and followers, and afterwards be

highly exalted.

None of these things can properly be said of Jeremiah.

Jeremiah was subject to the same sinful infirmities as other men. He was neither wounded nor bruised for the sins of his people, nor did he die on their behalf.

Although he suffered greatly because of them, he was far from bearing those sufferings with the perfect patience described in the prophecy. On account of his afflictions, he cursed the day of his birth.

—Jeremiah 20:14–18

He also prayed that he might see God's vengeance upon his persecutors:

> *"Let me see thy vengeance on them: for unto thee have I revealed my cause."*
>
> —Jeremiah 11:20

Again, he prayed:

> *"Pull them out like sheep for the slaughter, and prepare them for the day of slaughter."*
>
> —Jeremiah 12:3

Nor did Jeremiah possess a large body of disciples and followers, neither was he exalted and extolled in the manner described by Isaiah.

But every part of this prophecy agrees exactly with Jesus the Messiah.

His first appearance was humble and without outward splendour. On this account, He was despised and rejected by men.

He suffered many things at their hands and bore them with inexpressible patience. At last He endured death itself, which was an expiatory sacrifice for the sins of all His people.

Their sins were laid upon Him, and He bore them in His own body upon the tree.

Having risen from the dead, He is now exalted and made very high at His Father's right hand, where He ever lives to intercede for transgressors.

From the time of His resurrection until the present, He has possessed a great multitude of disciples who have embraced His doctrine and maintained His cause.

A seed has served Him and will continue to do so until time shall be no more.

Secondly, having considered these two remarkable prophecies which speak fully of the Messiah as suffering, I shall now examine the several parts of His sufferings as they are foretold in them and show how they were fulfilled in Jesus.

First, He was to endure much reproach from men. He was to be despised and rejected, and even regarded as a worm rather than a man:

"But I am a worm, and no man; a reproach of men, and despised of the people."

—Psalm 22:6

"He is despised and rejected of men."

—Isaiah 53:3

How greatly Jesus was despised by the people of His generation is sufficiently evident. They treated Him with contempt because of His humble family, His upbringing, His outward poverty, and the low social standing of those who followed Him.

When He hung upon the cross, His enemies mocked, ridiculed, and scorned Him. They wagged their heads at Him and used the very words foretold in the Psalm:

"He trusted on the Lord that he would deliver him: let him deliver him, seeing he delighted in him."

—Psalm 22:8

Secondly, the Messiah was to be struck and beaten.

The Judge of Israel was to be struck with a rod upon the cheek:

"They shall smite the judge of Israel with a rod upon the cheek."

—Micah 5:1

This was fulfilled in Jesus, who was struck by both the Jewish and Roman soldiers. He endured this treatment with perfect patience and, as had been prophesied concerning Him, gave His back to those who struck Him and His cheeks to those who pulled out the hair:

"I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair: I hid not my face from shame and spit-

ting."

—Isaiah 50:6

Thirdly, the Messiah was to suffer death for the sins of His people.

He was not only to be wounded and bruised for their transgressions, but to be cut off from the land of the living. His soul was to be poured out unto death, and He was to be brought into the dust of death.

—Isaiah 53:5, 8, 12; Psalm 22:15

Accordingly, Jesus:

"Died for our sins according to the scriptures."

—1 Corinthians 15:3

Fourthly, as the Messiah was to die, He was particularly to die the death of the cross.

This may be gathered from the piercing of His hands and feet, the dislocation of His bones, and the terrible fever which would dry up His strength like a potsherd and cause His tongue to cling to His jaws. All these circumstances, which commonly attended crucifixion, were foretold in Psalm 22.

It is evident that Jesus:

"Became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross."

—Philippians 2:8

It had appeared highly unlikely that He would die in this manner. Crucifixion was a Roman punishment and was not ordinarily inflicted for the offence with which Jesus was accused and condemned.

Nevertheless, He died in this precise manner so that the prophecies concerning Him might be fulfilled and His own predictions confirmed.

Fifthly, the Messiah was to be buried and laid in the grave, which was the final part of His humiliation.

Isaiah says of Him:

"And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death."

—Isaiah 53:9

The words may be rendered:

"He appointed His grave with the wicked, but His sepulchral

monument was with the rich."

This was literally fulfilled in Jesus.

His grave was placed under the guard of wicked soldiers, who were stationed there to prevent His disciples from removing His body and claiming that He had risen from the dead. This circumstance might appear dishonourable.

Yet His burial was also honourable, for He was laid in the new tomb of Joseph of Arimathea, a rich man, who provided the place of burial at his own expense.

This honour was done to Him because:

"He had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth."

—Isaiah 53:9

By this, another prophecy concerning the Messiah's burial was fulfilled:

"And his rest shall be glorious."

—Isaiah 11:10

These words may properly be understood of the grave, which is a place of rest:

"There the wicked cease from troubling; and there the weary be at rest."

—Job 3:17

The Vulgate renders Isaiah's words:

"His grave shall be glorious."

I have already proved that this prophecy belongs to the Messiah.

Abarbinel acknowledges both that the passage concerns the Messiah and that this particular clause may be understood of His honourable burial. This provides a sufficient answer to the objection raised from Grotius and White against the prophecy in Isaiah.

To conclude this part of the argument, the occasion, nature, efficacy, and purpose of the Messiah's sufferings, as revealed in these prophecies, are exactly the same as those attributed to the sufferings of Jesus in the New Testament.

The Messiah was not to suffer for any sin of His own, but for the sins of others.

His death was to be a propitiatory sacrifice through which sin

would be abolished and put away, peace and pardon obtained, and everlasting righteousness brought in.

He was to accomplish this on behalf of all the people of God, for He would bear the sins of many and be stricken for the transgressions of His people.

All this agrees perfectly with the New Testament doctrine concerning the occasion, nature, efficacy, purpose, and extent of the sufferings of Jesus.

Thirdly, I shall now consider the several circumstances which were to attend the Messiah's death and sufferings.

Thirdly, I shall consider the several circumstances which were to attend the Messiah's death and sufferings.

First, the Messiah was to be betrayed by one of His own familiar friends.

This circumstance is foretold in the Psalms:

"Yea, mine own familiar friend, in whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread, hath lifted up his heel against me."

—Psalm 41:9

Jesus expressly applied these words to the betrayal committed against Him:

"He that eateth bread with me hath lifted up his heel against me."

—John 13:18

The prophecy was exactly fulfilled in Judas Iscariot. He was one of the twelve disciples, had lived in familiar company with Jesus, had shared His table, and had been entrusted with the common purse.

Yet this man betrayed Him into the hands of His enemies.

Another Psalm describes the same circumstance:

"For it was not an enemy that reproached me; then I could have borne it: neither was it he that hated me that did magnify himself against me; then I would have hid myself from him:

"But it was thou, a man mine equal, my guide, and mine acquaintance.

"We took sweet counsel together, and walked unto the house of God in company."

—Psalm 55:12–14

These words agree far more fully with Judas and his treatment of Jesus than with any enemy of David.

Secondly, the precise price for which the Messiah would be valued and betrayed was also foretold:

"And I said unto them, If ye think good, give me my price; and if not, forbear. So they weighed for my price thirty pieces of silver.

"And the Lord said unto me, Cast it unto the potter: a goodly price that I was prized at of them. And I took the thirty pieces of silver, and cast them to the potter in the house of the Lord."

—Zechariah 11:12–13

This prophecy was literally fulfilled in Jesus.

Judas went to the chief priests and said:

"What will ye give me, and I will deliver him unto you?"

They agreed with him for thirty pieces of silver.

—Matthew 26:15

After Jesus had been condemned, Judas repented of what he had done and returned the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders.

When they refused to receive the money, he cast it down in the temple and departed. The priests then used it to purchase the potter's field as a burial place for strangers.

—Matthew 27:3–10

The Evangelist expressly declares that in this the words of the prophet were fulfilled.

It has been objected that Matthew attributes the prophecy to Jeremiah, although the words now appear in Zechariah.

But this does not prove that Matthew was mistaken. The sacred writings were divided by the Jews into three principal parts: the Law, the Prophets, and the Psalms.

As the whole third division was sometimes called the Psalms because it began with that book, so the division containing the later prophets might be called Jeremiah because it began with his

prophecy.

A passage found in Zechariah could therefore properly be cited under the more general name of Jeremiah.

Moreover, the learned Mr Mede has produced several arguments to show that the final chapters of Zechariah may originally have been written by Jeremiah. If this is correct, the difficulty is entirely removed.

It remains to consider whether Zechariah's prophecy was properly applied to Judas's betrayal of Jesus.

That the passage concerns the Messiah is evident both from the text and from its context.

The Person spoken of is commanded to feed the flock appointed for slaughter. This very suitably represents the miserable condition of the Jewish people at the time of Christ's coming.

He undertakes this work and provides Himself with what is necessary for it. Yet He is rejected, despised, and hated by the shepherds—that is, by the principal rulers in church and state—because He sharply reproves their doctrines and practices.

He therefore rejects them and dissolves both their civil and ecclesiastical state. These circumstances can properly agree with no other period than the time of Jesus.

Lest His treatment of them should appear too severe, one striking example is given of their shameful ingratitude and contempt: they valued Him at no more than thirty pieces of silver, which were afterwards cast to the potter.

It may be objected that, according to the prophecy, the money was given into the hands of the Messiah rather than into the hands of the person who betrayed Him:

"If ye think good, give me my price; and if not, forbear."

—Zechariah 11:12

The words, however, need not be understood as meaning, "Give the money directly to me." They may be rendered:

"Give my price."

That is, give what you consider to be My value into the hands of the person who is to betray Me.

This is exactly what occurred. They weighed out for His price

thirty pieces of silver, the precise sum which the chief priests agreed to give Judas.

—Matthew 26:15

It may also be objected that Matthew's citation differs from the words of the prophet. Zechariah says:

"I took the thirty pieces of silver, and cast them to the potter."

Matthew says:

"They took the thirty pieces of silver … and gave them for the potter's field."

—Matthew 27:9–10

The Greek expression translated they took may properly be rendered I took. The following verb may likewise be understood as I gave, as the Syriac version renders it.

This interpretation is also required by the words which follow:

"As the Lord appointed me."

Otherwise, the construction would be difficult: "They gave them for the potter's field, as the Lord appointed me." The natural sense is:

"I took the thirty pieces of silver and gave them for the potter's field, as the Lord appointed me."

But it may still be objected that the Messiah Himself is said to cast the money to the potter, whereas Judas cast it into the temple and the chief priests afterwards bought the field.

Jesus may properly be said to have done what Judas and the priests did because, by His almighty power and providence, He overruled their sinful actions so that the prophecy was fulfilled.

Judas intended to keep the money for his own use, and the priests would gladly have received it back into their treasury. But Christ so governed these events that Judas returned the money and cast it into the temple, while the priests refused to place it in the treasury and instead used it to purchase the potter's field.

Thus the prophecy was fulfilled in its literal sense.

Thirdly, another circumstance attending the Messiah's sufferings was that He would be forsaken by the rest of His disciples.

The Evangelists record that, when Jesus was arrested, His disciples forsook Him and fled. The Jews themselves also acknowledge this.

Jesus had foretold that this would happen because it had been

written:

"I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered abroad."

—Matthew 26:31

The prophecy referred to is found in Zechariah:

"Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of hosts: smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered."

—Zechariah 13:7

This is plainly a prophecy concerning the Messiah.

The title Shepherd is frequently given to the Messiah in the Old Testament and is expressly claimed by Jesus in the New.

He is also described as God's Fellow—a title which cannot properly belong to any mere creature but agrees fully with Him who existed in the form of God and thought it no robbery to be equal with God.

—Philippians 2:6

Many Jewish writers refer Zechariah's words to the days of the Messiah, and particularly to the Messiah whom they call the son of Joseph.

Fourthly, the Messiah was not only to be forsaken by His disciples, but also by His God.

This abandonment was foretold in Psalm 22, which has already been proved to concern the Messiah.

Accordingly, while Jesus suffered upon the cross, He was forsaken by His Father and, in His agony, used the very words with which the Psalm begins:

"My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"

—Psalm 22:1; Matthew 27:46

Fifthly, the Messiah was to be numbered with transgressors.

This was fulfilled when the Jews crucified two thieves with Jesus, placing one on His right hand and the other on His left:

"And the scripture was fulfilled, which saith, And he was numbered with the transgressors."

—Mark 15:28

Nothing could have fulfilled this more visibly than His being placed between them and dying alongside them. By this action, He was publicly regarded as a criminal and numbered among transgressors.

Sixthly, His garments were to be divided, and lots were to be cast upon His clothing:

> *"They part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture."*
>
> —Psalm 22:18

This was literally fulfilled in Jesus.

—Matthew 27:35

Seventhly, gall was to be given to Him for food and vinegar for Him to drink:

> *"They gave me also gall for my meat; and in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink."*
>
> —Psalm 69:21

These things were accordingly given to Jesus while He was upon the cross.

In order that this Scripture might be fulfilled, He said:

> *"I thirst."*
>
> —John 19:28

This was not merely an accommodation of language found in the Psalms. The prophecy was not simply that the Messiah would say, "I thirst."

His words showed that the thirst foretold in Psalm 22 was truly upon Him:

> *"My strength is dried up like a potsherd; and my tongue cleaveth to my jaws."*
>
> —Psalm 22:15

That thirst then became the occasion for fulfilling the further prophecy that gall and vinegar would be given to Him.

Eighthly, not one of His bones was to be broken.

It is remarkable that, although it was customary to break the legs of those who had been crucified, and although the legs of the thieves crucified with Jesus were broken, His were not.

When the soldiers came to Him and found that He was already dead, notwithstanding all their rage and malice against Him, they did not break His legs.

The Evangelist therefore observes:

"For these things were done, that the scripture should be fulfilled, A bone of him shall not be broken."

—John 19:36

The Scripture referred to is:

"He keepeth all his bones: not one of them is broken."

—Psalm 34:20

Even if these words were understood of righteous persons generally, they received a remarkable and particular fulfilment in Jesus.

Yet they appear rather to refer to one particular Person, and who can more properly be intended than the Messiah?

They cannot be understood as an absolute promise concerning all righteous people, since the bones of righteous persons may be broken as well as those of the wicked.

If the promise applied without exception to every righteous person, anyone suffering such an injury might wrongly conclude that he was not righteous or was not under God's special care and protection.

The prophecy therefore received its proper and exact fulfilment in Jesus the Messiah.

Ninthly, the Messiah was to be pierced at the time of His sufferings.

This was fulfilled in Jesus, for one of the soldiers pierced His side with a spear. The Evangelist therefore observes that the Scripture was fulfilled:

"They shall look on him whom they pierced."

—John 19:37

The prophecy referred to is found in Zechariah:

"They shall look upon me whom they have pierced."

—Zechariah 12:10

Many Jewish writers understand this passage as referring to the Messiah and to His being pierced.

The author of The Scheme of Literal Prophecy objects that the words plainly do not concern Jesus. His reason is that the prophecy speaks of a war in Judea, the siege of Jerusalem, and the deliverance of the Jews through the destruction of all the nations gathered against the city.

Mr Sykes raises the same objection. He asks whether any of these circumstances occurred among the Jews at the time of Jesus' death. He argues that the very opposite took place: instead of the nations surrounding Jerusalem being destroyed, Jerusalem itself was destroyed; instead of receiving the spirit of grace and supplication, the Jews were hardened against Christ; and instead of mourning for Him whom they pierced, they have continued to curse Him and His followers.

To both objections I answer that these events were not, according to the prophecy, required to occur at the precise time when the Messiah was pierced.

They belong instead to the future time when the Jews will look upon Him whom they pierced and mourn for Him, having been brought under conviction of their sin in doing so.

The piercing of the Messiah has already received its literal fulfilment in Jesus.

Although the Jews remain hardened against Him to this day, there is no reason to conclude that the remaining part of the prophecy will not also be fulfilled in God's appointed time.

Then they will look upon Him whom they pierced and mourn for Him, and the circumstances connected with that event will likewise receive their complete accomplishment.

CHAPTER 11

Concerning the Resurrection of the Messiah from the Dead

Having considered the several prophecies concerning the Messiah's sufferings and the circumstances which were to attend them, I shall now proceed to examine those which speak of His resurrection from the dead.

First, I shall begin with Psalm 16:10:

"For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption."

The apostles Peter and Paul both expressly apply these words to the resurrection of Jesus.

—Acts 2:25–32; 13:35–37

Their application is entirely justified, for the passage cannot properly refer to David himself.

David both died and was buried, and his body remained in the grave and experienced corruption. Peter therefore said plainly:

"David is not ascended into the heavens."

—Acts 2:34

Again:

"David … is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day."

—Acts 2:29

Paul likewise observes that David:

"After he had served his own generation by the will of God, fell on sleep, and was laid unto his fathers, and saw corruption."

—Acts 13:36

But the Person spoken of in the Psalm was not to be left in the state of the dead, nor was His body to experience corruption.

The words must therefore refer to another Person, of whom David spoke prophetically.

That Person is the Messiah, who is appropriately called God's Holy One.

Jesus was holy in His conception and birth, holy in His nature, holy in His life, and entirely free from sin. He was therefore properly

called:

"That holy thing which shall be born of thee."

—Luke 1:35

Although He truly died and His soul was separated from His body, His soul was not left in the state of the dead, nor was His body permitted to remain in the grave long enough to experience corruption.

On the third day He rose again, exactly according to the prophecy. Peter therefore concludes:

"He seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption."

—Acts 2:31

Secondly, another passage which may be considered a prophecy of the Messiah's resurrection is Psalm 2:7. The apostles produce it as evidence of this event:

"I will declare the decree: the Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee."

—Psalm 2:7

The whole Psalm belongs to the Messiah and was understood in this way by the ancient Jewish writers, who applied several parts of it, and particularly this verse, to Him.

That the entire Psalm concerns the Messiah may easily be gathered from the vain counsel and furious opposition of the kings and rulers of the earth against Him.

—Psalm 2:1–3

In verse 2, He is expressly called the Lord's Anointed, or Messiah.

It is also evident from God's decree and settled determination to establish Him as King upon Zion, notwithstanding the utmost efforts of His enemies against Him.

—Psalm 2:4–6

The same conclusion follows from His receiving the Gentiles as His inheritance and the uttermost parts of the earth as His possession.

—Psalm 2:8–9

This can properly belong to no other person.

Above all, the reverence, worship, and submission which are required to be given to Him, together with the trust and confidence which are to be placed in Him, cannot agree with David or with any mere creature:

"Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way."

"Blessed are all they that put their trust in him."

—Psalm 2:12

The seventh verse is equally inapplicable to anyone except the Messiah:

"For unto which of the angels said he at any time, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee?"

—Hebrews 1:5

If these words were never addressed to any angel, much less could they properly refer to David or to any other ordinary man.

They are therefore rightly produced by the apostles as evidence of the Messiah's resurrection.

Resurrection may very suitably be expressed as a begetting. The general resurrection of the dead is itself called the regeneration, or a begetting again.

—Matthew 19:28

For the same reason, Jesus is called:

"The firstborn from the dead."

—Colossians 1:18

There is a close resemblance between birth and resurrection. In both, a person is brought forth into a new condition of life.

The resurrection of Christ was also the birthday of His kingdom—the time when He was publicly made and declared to be both Lord and Christ.

By His resurrection, He was:

"Declared to be the Son of God with power."

—Romans 1:4

The words:

"Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee"

were therefore most properly applied by the apostles to His resurrection from the dead.

Thirdly, another prophecy which appears to concern the resurrection of the Messiah is found in Isaiah:

"Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise."

—Isaiah 26:19

Many Jewish and Christian interpreters understand these words as referring to the resurrection from the dead.

They are not the words of the prophet himself, but an answer to the complaint expressed in the preceding verses. The prophet is assured that, although God's people might be distressed and diminished by captivity, war, famine, and other calamities, they would live again in the resurrection of the just.

The Person speaking appears to be the Messiah. This may be gathered from the descriptions given of Him in the surrounding passage.

He is the Lord Jehovah, in whom there is everlasting strength.

—Isaiah 26:4

He is the Desire and expectation of His people.

—Isaiah 26:8–9

He ordains peace for them and works all their works in them.

—Isaiah 26:12

He also possesses sole dominion over them.

—Isaiah 26:13

At the time when the Messiah's dead body would rise from the grave, others were also to rise with Him.

This was fulfilled in Jesus:

"And the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints which slept arose,

"And came out of the graves after his resurrection."

—Matthew 27:52–53

The words may also be rendered:

"Thy dead men shall live; as my dead body shall they arise."

This may mean either that they will rise in the same manner as His body arose, or that their resurrection is as certain as His own.

In agreement with this, the resurrection of Jesus is both the pattern and the pledge of the resurrection of His people:

"But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first-fruits of them that slept."

—1 Corinthians 15:20

Fourthly, as another proof from the Old Testament that the Messiah was to rise from the dead, the apostles appeal to Isaiah 55:3:

"I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David."

That the Messiah is intended appears plainly from the name David, which is frequently given to Him.

—Jeremiah 30:9; Ezekiel 34:23; Hosea 3:5

It also appears from the offices attributed to Him in the following verse, where He is said to be given as a witness to the people, a leader and commander of them.

—Isaiah 55:4

Aben Ezra and Kimchi understand these words, as well as the preceding ones, to refer to the Messiah.

The principal difficulty is to show how this passage provides a proper proof of the Messiah's resurrection from the dead.

By the sure mercies of David are meant the blessings of the everlasting covenant, which the Messiah was to obtain for all His people through His death and sufferings.

But if He had died and had not risen again, those blessings would not have been confirmed and made sure to them.

Therefore, when God promises to give His people the sure mercies of David—or of the Messiah—He promises not only that the Messiah would die to obtain those mercies, but also that He would rise from the dead to secure them for His people.

Fifthly, as the resurrection of the Messiah was foretold by the prophets, so the precise time of His resurrection was also fixed.

The writers of the New Testament declare not only that Christ rose from the dead according to the Scriptures, but that He rose on the third day according to the Scriptures:

"And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures."

—1 Corinthians 15:4

The Scriptures referred to are not merely typical predictions, such as Isaac's deliverance on the third day after his father had given him up to death, or Jonah's remaining three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish.

—Genesis 22:4; Jonah 1:17; Matthew 12:40

Undoubtedly, these events contained types of the Messiah's resurrection. But there is also a direct prophecy which, in its literal and obvious sense, concerns this event:

"After two days will he revive us: in the third day he will raise us up, and we shall live in his sight."

—Hosea 6:2

The Targum understands these words as referring to the resurrection of the dead.

Yet, in their literal sense, they can properly refer to no resurrection except that of the Messiah and of His people in Him. The appointed time—the third day—agrees with no other resurrection.

The coming of the Messiah is also foretold in the following verse as something glorious in itself and highly beneficial to the people of God:

"Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the Lord: his going forth is prepared as the morning."

—Hosea 6:3

This interpretation also agrees best with the purpose of the passage, which is to encourage sinners to return to the Lord, from whom they might expect healing and pardon through the promised Messiah.

By His death, He would obtain life for them; and by rising again on the third day, He would secure their justification and acceptance with God, so that they might live in His sight.

The words are expressed in the plural:

"In the third day he will raise us up."

This was intended to encourage the people to hope and trust in God by considering their participation in the Messiah's resurrection

and in the many blessings which would arise from it.

The Messiah was not to rise from the dead merely as a private individual, but as a public Person representing all His people.

His resurrection would therefore include the assurance of theirs. Because He lives, they shall live also.

Thus Hosea's prophecy fixes not only the Messiah's resurrection from the dead, but also the precise time of it—the third day. It received its literal and exact fulfilment in Jesus.

That Jesus rose from the dead according to these prophecies of the Old Testament, as well as according to His own predictions, is supported by the clearest evidence.

That He truly died is not disputed even by the Jews themselves. That He rose again was unanimously asserted by His disciples:

> *"To whom also he shewed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days."*
>
> —Acts 1:3

They therefore had every opportunity they could desire to satisfy themselves concerning the truth of His resurrection.

Some of them had not been easily persuaded. Yet they had known Him perfectly during His life, and after His resurrection they ate and drank with Him. They saw the marks of the nails and the spear in His hands, feet, and side. They touched His body, saw Him on several occasions, and conversed with Him throughout forty days.

Having received this visible and convincing evidence, they proclaimed His resurrection to the world.

They could have had no selfish purpose in doing so, for they knew that their testimony would expose them to shame, reproach, affliction, persecution, and even death wherever they went.

Those who bore this testimony were also men of honesty and integrity, and they were not merely two or three witnesses, nor even the twelve alone. Christ was seen by more than five hundred brethren at one time.

—1 Corinthians 15:6

Besides this human testimony—which in any other matter of fact would readily be accepted—we have the testimony of an angel:

> *"He is not here: for he is risen, as he said."*

—Matthew 28:6

We also have the testimony of the Holy Ghost. Speaking of Christ's resurrection, the apostle says:

"And we are his witnesses of these things; and so is also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him."

—Acts 5:32

The Holy Ghost bore this testimony through the abundant outpouring of His gifts and graces upon men, as Jesus had promised during His life.

Even the shameful means used by the Jews to suppress belief in the resurrection may be turned into evidence of its truth. They bribed the soldiers to say:

"His disciples came by night, and stole him away while we slept."

—Matthew 28:13

This shows that they were inwardly convinced that the body was no longer in the tomb, though they were determined to prevent belief in the resurrection from spreading.

Besides, it is highly improbable that the disciples, who were a weak group of men and were then terrified and discouraged by the death of their Master, would have attempted to remove His body while they knew that soldiers were guarding the tomb.

Had they attempted it, why did the soldiers not prevent them, since they certainly possessed the power to do so?

And if the soldiers were asleep, as they claimed, what credit can be given to their testimony? If they were asleep, how could they know that the disciples had taken the body?

We have equally strong evidence that Jesus rose on the third day.

It was proper that He should remain in the grave long enough to establish beyond doubt that He was truly dead. Yet it was not fitting that He should remain there so long that His body would decay, since it had been prophesied that He would see no corruption.

The third day had been fixed by prophecy as the time of His resurrection, and Jesus Himself had declared that He would rise on that day. He accordingly did so.

Although only one complete day and two nights passed between

His death and resurrection, He nevertheless rose on the third day from His death. The day on which He died was counted as the first, and the day on which He rose as the third.

The resurrection of Jesus from the dead is therefore a principal article of the Christian faith:

> *"If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved."*
>
> —Romans 10:9

It is also an unquestionable evidence that Jesus is the true Messiah.

> *When the Jews asked Him for a sign, He gave them His resurrection as the great sign by which His claim would be confirmed.*
>
> —Matthew 12:38–40

This evidence ought therefore to satisfy every fair and reasonable inquirer.

CHAPTER 12

Concerning the Ascension of the Messiah into Heaven, His Session at God's Right Hand, and His Second Coming to Judgment

In the two preceding chapters, I have endeavoured to prove from the prophecies of the Old Testament that the Messiah was to suffer death and rise again from the dead.

My purpose in this chapter is to show that He was afterwards to ascend into heaven, sit down at God's right hand, and return a second time to judge the world in righteousness.

First, I shall endeavour to prove from the prophecies of the Old Testament that, after His resurrection from the dead, the Messiah was to ascend into heaven.

Several prophecies point clearly to this event, particularly Psalm 47:5:

> *"God is gone up with a shout, the Lord with the sound of a trumpet."*

Both Kimchi and Aben Ezra acknowledge that this Psalm belongs to the Messiah.

He is plainly represented in it in the glory of His royal majesty and as exalted upon the throne of His holiness.

It may be objected that these words cannot apply to the ascension of Jesus because His ascent into heaven was not visibly accompanied by a shout or by the sound of a trumpet.

But when the words of the angels to the disciples are considered, it is highly reasonable to conclude that He ascended with the acclamation of angels and the trumpet of God.

As the disciples stood looking toward heaven while Jesus ascended, the angels said:

> *"This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven."*
>
> —Acts 1:11

We are also told concerning His return:

> *"For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God."*

—1 Thessalonians 4:16

Since He will return in the same manner in which He ascended, it may properly be concluded that His ascension was attended by the joyful acclamations of angels, just as His second coming will be accompanied by the shout, the voice of the archangel, and the trumpet of God.

The Messiah's ascension into heaven may also be proved from His session at God's right hand. If He was not first to ascend into heaven, He could not sit at God's right hand there.

That He was to sit at God's right hand is plainly declared in Psalm 110:

"The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool."

—Psalm 110:1

This passage cannot properly be understood of David or of any other mere person, but only of the Messiah.

The apostle argues from its plain and literal meaning:

"For David is not ascended into the heavens: but he saith himself, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand."

—Acts 2:34

I shall consider this passage more fully when treating the Messiah's session at God's right hand.

Another prophecy of His ascension appears in Daniel:

"I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him."

—Daniel 7:13

Many Jewish writers acknowledge that the Son of Man in this passage is the Messiah. Indeed, the word Anani, meaning clouds, became among them a recognised name for the Messiah because of this prophecy.

The passage may very properly be understood of the Messiah's ascension into heaven and His entrance into the presence of the Most High.

First, He is said to come with the clouds of heaven. This was literally fulfilled in Jesus:

> *"And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight."*
>
> —Acts 1:9

Secondly, He is brought near to the Ancient of Days by others. This agrees with Jesus being attended and conducted by angels into His Father's presence.

Thirdly, dominion, glory, and a kingdom are given to Him:

> *"And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom."*
>
> —Daniel 7:14

This agrees exactly with the exaltation of Jesus. Having ascended into heaven and been raised to God's right hand, He was publicly declared to be both Lord and Christ.

This interpretation is far more consistent with the literal meaning of Daniel than the explanation offered by the author of The Scheme of Literal Prophecy, who, following Grotius, understands the Son of Man to signify the Roman kingdom and His coming with the clouds of heaven merely to mean that it advanced with great speed.

Another prophecy of the Messiah's ascension may be found in Micah:

> *"The breaker is come up before them: they have broken up, and have passed through the gate, and are gone out by it: and their king shall pass before them, and the Lord on the head of them."*
>
> —Micah 2:13

The Jewish writers understand this passage as referring to the Messiah.

It may very properly be applied to Jesus, who has gone before His people and entered heaven as their Forerunner.

He has broken open the way, removed every obstacle, and opened the gates of heaven for them.

The clearest prophecy of the Messiah's ascension, however, is found in Psalm 68:

"Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led captivity captive: thou hast received gifts for men; yea, for the rebellious also, that the Lord God might dwell among them."

—Psalm 68:18

The purpose of this Psalm is to show that the presence of God among His people is always beneficial and saving to them, while bringing confusion and destruction upon their enemies.

The Psalmist first establishes this by recalling several examples from the period of the law. He then proceeds to describe the glory and security of the gospel church arising from the presence of Jehovah within it.

Jehovah is represented as attended by thousands of angels, ascending triumphantly into heaven, and becoming the Author of salvation.

—Psalm 68:17–20

The whole description agrees perfectly with the Messiah.

In particular, the words:

"Thou hast ascended on high"

cannot properly be understood of anyone else.

The Targum and Jarchi apply them to Moses ascending into the firmament when the law was given. But although Moses ascended to the summit of Mount Sinai, Scripture nowhere says that he ascended into heaven.

Aben Ezra understands the words as referring to David's ascent into the high fortresses of his enemies, but this interpretation is both weak and irrelevant.

Nor can they refer to God's ascent from Mount Sinai after giving the law, since Scripture nowhere records such an ascent.

They must therefore refer to the Messiah's ascension into heaven.

The expression on high is elsewhere used to describe heaven.

—Psalm 102:19; Jeremiah 25:30

This ascension is not to be understood figuratively, but literally. It was to be real, local, and visible, as the ascension of Jesus was.

The circumstances accompanying it confirm this meaning.

The Messiah was to lead captivity captive. This describes His triumphant conquest over all His enemies.

Jesus fulfilled it by making an end of sin, abolishing death, spoiling principalities and powers, and openly triumphing over them.

Having accomplished these victories, He ascended into heaven as a triumphant Conqueror.

Having ascended as a triumphant Conqueror, the Messiah was to receive gifts for men:

> *"Thou hast received gifts for men; yea, for the rebellious also, that the Lord God might dwell among them."*
>
> —Psalm 68:18

This was fulfilled in Jesus. Having ascended into heaven, He received from the Father the promised Holy Ghost—the gifts and graces of the Spirit in their fullness—and bestowed them upon men, even upon those who had formerly been rebellious.

Through these gifts, they became a suitable habitation for God, so that He might dwell with them and they with Him.

The apostle, when citing this passage and applying it to Jesus, expresses this final clause somewhat differently:

> *"When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men."*
>
> —Ephesians 4:8

Instead of saying that He received gifts for men, the apostle says that He gave gifts unto men.

The Jews have no reason to object to this difference, since their own Targum renders the passage in a similar manner. The Hebrew word may signify either receiving or giving.

Nor is there any difference in the meaning. The Messiah was to receive these gifts in order that He might give them to men. Jesus accordingly received them and then bestowed them.

As the words stand in the Psalm, they are a prophecy of what the Messiah was to do. As cited by the apostle, they are a declaration of what Jesus had already accomplished.

From the whole, it appears that the Messiah was to ascend into heaven according to the prophecies of the Old Testament.

These prophecies were fulfilled in Jesus. He had previously declared that He would ascend into heaven and afterwards actually

did so. His disciples witnessed His ascension, angels attended Him, and He was received into glory, where He ever lives to make intercession for His people.

Secondly, I shall show that, after ascending into heaven, the Messiah was to sit at God's right hand.

He is called:

"The man of thy right hand."

—Psalm 80:17

This title does not belong to Him merely because He is especially dear to God, as Benjamin was dear to his father and was therefore called the son of the right hand.

Nor is it merely because God upholds and sustains all things through Him, or because He was strengthened and supported by God's right hand while accomplishing the work of salvation.

He is called the Man of God's right hand because, having been exalted by that right hand, He was appointed to sit there.

This is expressly declared in the words:

"The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool."

—Psalm 110:1

That the Jews in the days of Jesus understood this Psalm as referring to the Messiah is evident from the conversation which took place between Him and them.

Jesus first asked:

"What think ye of Christ? whose son is he?"

—Matthew 22:42

They immediately answered:

"The Son of David."

He then asked:

"How then doth David in spirit call him Lord?"

To prove His point, He cited this very passage:

"The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool."

—Matthew 22:44

He then concluded:

"If David then call him Lord, how is he his son?"

—Matthew 22:45

This left them entirely unable to answer Him.

If the generally accepted interpretation of the Jewish synagogue at that time had been that this Psalm referred to someone other than the Messiah, they could easily have raised that objection.

But Jesus plainly argued from matters which were accepted on all sides and concerning which there was then no dispute: that David wrote the Psalm, that he wrote it under the inspiration of the Spirit, and that the Messiah was its subject.

Their silence itself amounts to an acknowledgement of this interpretation. Had they not believed the Psalm to concern the Messiah, they would not have been reduced to such confusion.

Some of their most celebrated later teachers have also acknowledged this interpretation.

Others, however, having observed the difficulty into which their forefathers were brought by the argument of Jesus, and the use Christians have since made of this Psalm in defence of their faith, have abandoned the interpretation of the ancient synagogue and introduced explanations which are foreign to the passage and inconsistent with one another.

Some would have Abraham the patriarch intended. They suppose that the Psalm was composed either by Melchizedek, by Eliezer the servant of Abraham, or by David, on account of Abraham's victory over the kings and his rescue of Lot.

—Genesis 14

But Melchizedek could not have been its author, for he was greater than Abraham. He blessed Abraham and received tithes from him, and therefore could not properly have called Abraham his lord.

Eliezer, being Abraham's servant, might indeed have called him lord. Yet he could not have assigned Abraham a seat at God's right hand or declared that he possessed an everlasting priesthood after the order of Melchizedek.

Nor could David have composed the Psalm concerning Abraham, for the same reasons.

Others would have David himself intended. But David was the

writer of the Psalm and cannot reasonably be supposed to speak in this manner concerning himself.

Some reply that one of the temple singers composed it concerning David. The title of the Psalm, however, declares the contrary.

Besides, David did not ascend into heaven or sit at God's right hand. Neither did he possess the priesthood, much less an everlasting priesthood after the order of Melchizedek.

That belongs only to Jesus the Messiah, who was:

"Made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec."

—Hebrews 6:20

The whole Psalm is therefore a clear prophecy concerning the kingdom and priesthood of the Messiah, His sufferings and exaltation, His conquest over His enemies, and the success of His gospel.

The Person speaking in the opening verse is Jehovah the Father. The Person addressed is David's Lord—the promised Messiah, whom the Jews sought and whose coming they earnestly desired.

—Malachi 3:1

What is said to Him is that He should sit at God's right hand. This expresses His exaltation, power, and authority.

The duration of this session is also declared:

"Until I make thine enemies thy footstool."

—Psalm 110:1

That is, He would remain there until all His enemies had been subdued beneath Him. The last enemy to be destroyed is death.

The writings of the New Testament continually affirm that Jesus has been exalted to God's right hand.

Jesus Himself declared before the high priest that they would see the Son of Man:

"Sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven."

—Matthew 26:64

His apostles likewise frequently declare that He is seated at the right hand of the Majesty on high.

Stephen saw Him standing there. He had risen, as it were, from His seat in response to the violence and dishonour being inflicted

upon His faithful servant.

His usual posture, however, is represented as sitting.

This signifies that He has completed the work appointed to Him, that His work has been graciously accepted, and that He has entered into His rest, satisfaction, and glory.

He has been placed upon the throne of God and crowned with glory and honour.

There He will continue to sit for the benefit of His church and people until He comes a second time to judge the world.

Thirdly, I shall now consider the Messiah's second coming to judgment.

That there will be a future judgment is not disputed between us and the Jews. It might also be readily established against the Deists from the very nature and reason of things.

The Jews suppose that this truth was revealed very early in the history of the world. They even maintain that the disagreement between Cain and Abel arose from their differing opinions concerning a future judgment, and that this led to Cain's cruel and murderous act.

However that may be, it is certain that Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of the day of judgment.

—Jude 14–15

The writings of the Old Testament also abundantly confirm it.

God is frequently represented there as Judge, and those who are to be judged include both the righteous and the wicked:

"God shall judge the righteous and the wicked."

—Ecclesiastes 3:17

The things to be brought into judgment are also clearly identified: every work, whether good or evil.

—Ecclesiastes 11:9; 12:14

The different outcomes are likewise revealed: the everlasting happiness of the saints and the perpetual punishment of the wicked.

Even the glory, majesty, order, and manner of this solemn proceeding are exactly described.

The judgment is set, the thrones are placed, the Judge appears in majesty, an innumerable company attends Him, a vast multitude

stands before Him, and the books are opened from which they are judged.

—Daniel 7:9–10; Revelation 20:11–12

It now remains to show that the Messiah is the Person appointed to carry out this judgment.

This appears from Daniel's vision:

"I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven."

—Daniel 7:13

The Person described is the Messiah, as many Jewish writers acknowledge. He is the same Son of Man whom Jesus declared would come in the clouds of heaven.

The judgment described immediately before His appearance therefore belongs to Him. The thrones are set, the books are opened, and the Son of Man comes to receive dominion, glory, and an everlasting kingdom.

—Daniel 7:9–14

The Messiah's work as Judge is also declared in the Psalms:

"For he cometh to judge the earth: he shall judge the world with righteousness, and the people with his truth."

—Psalm 96:13

Again:

"For he cometh to judge the earth: with righteousness shall he judge the world, and the people with equity."

—Psalm 98:9

These passages cannot properly refer merely to some temporal judgment carried out through an earthly prince.

The whole earth is to be judged, and the judgment is to be administered with perfect righteousness and truth. This belongs to the universal and final judgment which will be conducted by the Messiah.

The Person who comes to judge is Jehovah. Yet the office of judgment is assigned in the New Testament to Jesus:

"The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son."

—John 5:22

This gives further evidence of His divine nature, for only One who possesses perfect knowledge of every person, action, thought, and intention can judge the world in righteousness.

> *Jesus also declared that the Son of Man would come in His glory, attended by the holy angels, and would sit upon the throne of His glory. All nations would then be gathered before Him, and He would separate them as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats.*

—Matthew 25:31–32

This agrees exactly with the descriptions given by the prophets.

The Messiah's coming to judgment is therefore clearly foretold in the Old Testament, and Jesus has given every reason to expect that these prophecies will receive their literal fulfilment in Him.

The Messiah's coming to judgment is further described in Psalm 96:

"Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad; let the sea roar, and the fulness thereof.

"Let the field be joyful, and all that is therein: then shall all the trees of the wood rejoice

> *"Before the Lord: for he cometh, for he cometh to judge the earth: he shall judge the world with righteousness, and the people with his truth."*

—Psalm 96:11–13

The Person who comes to judge is Jehovah, and therefore the Messiah, who is Jehovah our righteousness.

The repeated expression:

"For he cometh, for he cometh"

may signify His second coming, the certainty of it, or the speed with which He will come when the appointed time arrives.

Jesus speaks in the same manner:

"Surely I come quickly."

—Revelation 22:20

To which John replies:

"Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus."

The Messiah will come, not in the low and humble condition in which He appeared at first, but with power and great glory.

He will come in the clouds of heaven, attended by all His holy angels. The trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised, and all nations will be gathered before Him.

His coming will be terrible to His enemies, who rejected His authority and refused to submit to His government. But it will be an occasion of great joy to His people.

As His first coming brought joy to those who waited for the consolation of Israel, so His second coming will bring joy to all who love and look for His glorious appearing.

At or near that time, many prophecies of the Old Testament which remain unfulfilled will receive their complete accomplishment.

For these things, the people of God under the present dispensation continue to look, wait, and pray.

The prophecies concerning the Messiah's second coming have not yet been literally fulfilled in Jesus. Yet since all the prophecies concerning His first coming have received such a literal and exact accomplishment in Him, there is every reason to believe that these will likewise be fulfilled.

Jesus and His apostles have taught us to expect precisely such a completion of them.

CHAPTER 13

Concerning the Magnificent and August Names and Titles of the Messiah in the Old Testament

I had intended to conclude this account of the Old Testament prophecies concerning the Messiah with the preceding chapter. However, I observed that several prophecies remained unconsidered which contain some of His most distinguished names and titles.

I therefore thought it necessary to examine them, particularly because the enemies of Christianity have raised objections against them.

In the course of this work, I have already considered several names and titles given to the Messiah in prophecy:

Shiloh—the Saviour or Peacemaker;

—Genesis 49:10

Immanuel—God with us;

—Isaiah 7:14

Messiah the Prince;

—Daniel 9:25
and:

The Desire of all nations.

—Haggai 2:7

Each of these titles displays both the greatness of His Person and His extraordinary usefulness to mankind.

I shall now consider several others, beginning with Isaiah 9:6:

> *"For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace."*

The ancient Jews applied this prophecy to the Messiah.

Their ridiculous traditions recorded in the Talmud—that God desired to make Hezekiah the Messiah and Sennacherib Gog and Magog—and the saying of Rabbi Hillel that Israel would have no Messiah because they had already enjoyed him in the days of Hezekiah, plainly show that they were convinced that the prophecy

concerned the Messiah.

Though they attempted foolishly to apply it to Hezekiah, they could do so only by first making Hezekiah himself the Messiah.

The Targum expressly refers the words to the Messiah, as do several other ancient and later Jewish writers.

Others, however, understand Hezekiah to be intended. Grotius and the author of The Scheme of Literal Prophecy follow this interpretation, the latter asserting that the words were plainly spoken of him.

But Hezekiah cannot possibly be the newborn Child described here. When this prophecy was delivered, he was already at least nine or ten years old.

Hezekiah cannot possibly be the newborn Child described here, for he was already at least nine or ten years old when this prophecy was delivered.

Nor can any sufficient reason be given why he should be called, in so unusual and particular a manner, a Son.

Neither can it be said of Hezekiah that he was the great Light which shone upon the inhabitants of Galilee, nor was his birth the occasion of the great joy described in the prophecy.

Still less can it properly be said of him:

> *"Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end."*
>
> —Isaiah 9:7

His government extended only over the two tribes of Judah and Benjamin. His reign continued for twenty-nine years and was attended for much of that time by affliction, oppression, and war.

Besides, the magnificent titles given in the prophecy cannot properly be applied to Hezekiah or to any other mere creature.

Rabbi Solomon ben Melech observes that these are:

"The names of the blessed God."

Kimchi and Jarchi also acknowledge this. They are therefore compelled to rearrange the words and read them in this manner:

"The Wonderful Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, shall call his name the Prince of Peace."

According to this interpretation, only the Prince of Peace is the name given to the Child, while all the preceding titles belong to God,

who gives Him that name.

But this reading is a violent distortion of the text. If such a method of rearranging words were allowed, it would leave us in great uncertainty concerning the meaning of the sacred writings.

As a learned writer has observed, this interpretation is contrary to the ordinary usage of Scripture. The expression his name is placed before the name of the One who calls, whereas everywhere else it stands between the person who gives the name and the person who receives it.

The name which follows the words his name is therefore always ascribed to the person who is being named, not to the one who gives the name.

—Genesis 16:15; 21:3; 35:18; Exodus 2:22; Ruth 4:17; 1 Samuel 1:20; 2 Samuel 12:25

The Jewish rearrangement is also contrary to the grammatical construction of the passage.

If the words were to be understood in their proposed order, a grammatical marker would have been required before the title Prince of Peace to distinguish it from the preceding titles. No such marker appears.

The accents also give no support to their interpretation.

A stronger pause does appear after the title the mighty God. But if the sentence were divided there, they would face the same difficulty in applying the title the everlasting Father to Hezekiah as they face in applying the mighty God to him.

Besides, what reason could there be for giving so many magnificent divine titles to God merely in connection with the naming of a young prince?

When God gave new names to other distinguished persons, or changed the names of those who were highly favoured by Him, He never used language of this kind.

The Jews further object that the Hebrew verb is in the active rather than the passive form. They therefore argue that the words should be translated:

"He shall call his name,"

rather than:

"His name shall be called."

On this basis, they are ready to charge Christians with corrupting the text.

It is true that the verb is active in form. Yet nothing is more common in the Hebrew language than for an active verb in the third person to be used in a passive sense when the person performing the action is not expressed.

This is plainly the meaning of the same form in several other passages.

—Genesis 16:14; 1 Samuel 2:16; Isaiah 62:2

There is therefore no corruption in translating the words:

"His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace."

All these names and titles belong to the Child who was to be born and the Son who was to be given.

The surrounding context gives further evidence that the Messiah is intended.

The people who walked in darkness were to see a great Light, and joy was to be increased as at the time of harvest or after a great victory. The burden and yoke of the oppressor were to be broken, not by the confused noise of battle or by garments rolled in blood, but suddenly and irresistibly, like fuel consumed by fire.

The Person placed upon David's throne would bear the government upon His shoulder, rule with righteousness, and continually increase the peace of His subjects.

He might properly be called Wonderful, because He was to be born of a virgin.

—Isaiah 7:14

He might be called Counsellor, because the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, was to rest upon Him.

—Isaiah 11:2

He might be called the mighty God, because He is the mighty Lord who sits at God's right hand, rules in the midst of His enemies, and obtains complete victory over them.

—Psalm 110:1–2, 5–6

CHAPTER 13

He might be called the everlasting Father, because He would see His seed and prolong His days.

—Isaiah 53:10

He might be called the Prince of Peace, because He is the Man of peace who would speak peace to the Gentiles, and in whose days peace would greatly abound.

—Micah 5:5; Zechariah 9:10; Psalm 72:3, 7

How well these names also agree with Jesus the Messiah may easily be seen.

He may properly be called Wonderful, not only because of His extraordinary and miraculous conception and birth, but also because of the many astonishing miracles which He performed.

If we consider Him as both God and man, possessing two natures—the divine and the human—united in one Person, He appears in the fullest sense to be a wonder and a miracle.

With equal propriety, He may be called Counsellor.

The Septuagint renders the title:

"The Angel of the great counsel."

He was always with God and was perfectly acquainted with all His purposes, designs, and counsels.

He was consulted, as it were, in all the works of God's hands, particularly creation and redemption.

He is the Wisdom of God, and in Him are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. He is therefore perfectly qualified to give counsel and direction to His people.

No less does He deserve the title the mighty God.

He has spoiled principalities and powers, subdued all His own enemies and those of His people, obtained everlasting salvation for sinners, and is able to save completely all who come to God through Him.

He may also very properly be called the everlasting Father, or, as the Septuagint renders the words:

"The Father of the age to come."

The world to come has not been placed in subjection to angels.

—Hebrews 2:5

God has placed it under the care, government, and direction of His Son, Jesus Christ.

At His coming, this new age or world began. He may therefore properly be called its Father.

Finally, nothing could more fully and suitably express the disposition of His heart, the nature of His work, and the abundant blessings which flow from His goodness to the children of men than the title:

The Prince of Peace.

When these things are properly considered, the author of The Scheme of Literal Prophecy, together with Grotius and the Jewish writers, has little reason to conclude that Isaiah's words were plainly spoken of Hezekiah.

They should rather conclude that they were plainly spoken of Jesus the Messiah.

Neither does the Jewish objector have any reason to say, in so bold and insulting a manner, that it is impossible for Jesus to be called by these names.

He asks how Jesus can be called Wonderful and Counsellor when one of His own foolish disciples knew His counsels well enough to betray Him into the hands of His enemies.

He asks how Jesus can be called the mighty God when He was put to death.

He further asks how He can be called the everlasting Father when He died before He had lived out half the ordinary span of human life.

Finally, he asks how Jesus can be called the Prince of Peace when there was no peace in His days, and when He Himself declared:

"I came not to send peace, but a sword."

—Matthew 10:34

With what spite and malice these objections are made, and how much they lack both truth and understanding, may easily be gathered from what has already been said concerning Jesus and the application of this prophecy to Him.

Secondly, I shall consider Jeremiah 23:6, where another of the Messiah's names is given:

"In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely: and this is his name whereby he shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS."

The Person intended is undoubtedly the same One who, in the preceding verse, is called the righteous Branch and is promised to be raised up to David:

"Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth."

—Jeremiah 23:5

The Targum expressly understands this righteous Branch to be the Messiah.

Grotius would have Zerubbabel intended by the righteous Branch. But this cannot be correct.

Although Zerubbabel belonged to David's family, he was never king over Judah and Israel. Nor did the people enjoy the safety, security, and prosperity described in this prophecy during his days.

Zerubbabel was undoubtedly a righteous man, but he was not righteous in the eminent and distinguished sense intended here. Neither was his name:

"The Lord our righteousness."

Nor can any sufficient reason be given why he should have been called by such a name.

Everything, however, agrees perfectly with the Messiah.

He was frequently promised and always expected as a King. The pleasure of the Lord was to prosper in His hand, and through Him judgment and justice were to be executed in the earth.

Righteousness was to be the girdle of His loins, and faithfulness the girdle of His reins.

—Isaiah 11:5

Israel was to be saved in Him with an everlasting salvation.

—Isaiah 45:17

He was to be just and righteous in Himself and to bring in everlasting righteousness for others, by which He would justify many.

It is therefore no wonder that His name should be called:

"The Lord our righteousness."

This name is fully deserved by Jesus the Messiah, who has become:

"The end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth."

—Romans 10:4

He is also made by God unto us:

"Wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption."

—1 Corinthians 1:30

Abarbinel argues that The Lord our righteousness is not the name of the Messiah, but the name of God, who calls the Messiah the righteous Branch.

But this interpretation is contrary to the natural order of the words and cannot be maintained without violently distorting the text.

Rabbi Saadiah Gaon separates the Lord from our righteousness. He allows that our righteousness is the name of the Messiah, but argues that the Lord is the name of God, who calls Him so.

Yet this division is contrary to the Hebrew accents.

Aben Ezra opposed Saadiah on this very point. He observed that the accent upon the words he shall call him, or he shall be called, separates them from Jehovah, while the accent upon Jehovah joins it to our righteousness.

This confirms the translation:

"The Lord our righteousness."

One further point should be observed before leaving this prophecy.

The Hebrew verb translated passively as:

"He shall be called"

is active in form and may be rendered:

"He shall call him."

The Targum and the Septuagint both translate it in this way.

Yet, as already observed concerning the preceding prophecy, active verbs in the third person are often used passively when the person performing the action is not named.

If the active meaning is insisted upon, the subject may easily be supplied:

"Everyone shall call Him the Lord our righteousness,"

or:

"God shall call Him the Lord our righteousness."

Kimchi and others understand it in this way:

"Israel shall call Him the Lord our righteousness."

In every case, the name belongs to the Messiah.

From the whole, it appears that this prophecy belongs to the Messiah and may be very easily applied to Jesus.

Thirdly, the next prophecy of this kind which I shall consider is Zechariah 6:12:

"Behold the man whose name is The BRANCH; and he shall grow up out of his place, and he shall build the temple of the Lord."

The same Person is spoken of under the same name and character earlier in the prophecy:

"Behold, I will bring forth my servant the BRANCH."

—Zechariah 3:8

The Targum paraphrases these words:

"Behold, I will bring forth my servant the Messiah."

Many Jewish interpreters have understood the passage in this way.

I have already observed that the Messiah is called:

"A righteous Branch"

—Jeremiah 23:5

The same title is given to Him in Jeremiah 33:15.

Isaiah likewise declares:

"In that day shall the branch of the Lord be beautiful and glorious."

—Isaiah 4:2

The Targum renders this:

"At that time the Messiah of the Lord shall be for joy and glory."

Kimchi also applies the passage to Him.

Again, the Messiah is called a Branch growing from the roots of

Jesse:

"And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots."

—Isaiah 11:1

We therefore see that the title the Branch is frequently given to the Messiah.

Perhaps there is also a reference to this name in the Psalm:

"There will I make the horn of David to bud: I have ordained a lamp for mine anointed."

—Psalm 132:17

The Jews themselves have understood it in this way. In their prayers for the Messiah's coming, they frequently use words such as these:

"O God, cause the horn of David Thy servant to bud, and prepare a lamp for the son of Jesse, Thy Messiah, speedily in our days."

The author of The Scheme of Literal Prophecy, following Grotius and White, nevertheless maintains that Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Zechariah did not use the title Branch to signify the Messiah.

According to him, Isaiah 4:2 refers to the Jews returning from captivity; Isaiah 11:1 refers to Hezekiah; and Jeremiah 23:5, Zechariah 3:8, and Zechariah 6:12 refer to Zerubbabel.

Yet he offers no proper proof of these interpretations.

It is much more reasonable to understand Isaiah 4:2 as referring to the Messiah than to the Jews returning from captivity. What remarkable beauty and glory appeared in them, even after their return?

Besides, the Branch of the Lord and the fruit of the earth are plainly distinguished from those who escaped from Israel and those who remained in Zion.

The beauty and glory foretold of this Branch agree far more fully with the Messiah. The same is true of the blessings promised in the following verses: the sanctification of God's people, the washing away of their filth, the cleansing of their blood, and their protection and glory.

I have already proved that Hezekiah cannot be intended in Isaiah 11:1, since he had been born several years before the prophecy was

delivered.

I have also shown that Zerubbabel cannot be Jeremiah's righteous Branch.

I shall now endeavour to prove that the Messiah, and not Zerubbabel, is intended by Zechariah when he says:

"Behold the man whose name is The BRANCH."

The Targum reads:

"Behold the man whose name is the Messiah."

Jarchi acknowledges that some interpret the passage of the King Messiah, and Rabbi Abendana strongly defends that interpretation. It is also the view of several ancient Jewish writers.

That this is the true meaning may readily be gathered from the context.

First, the Person described was to be both a King and a Priest:

"He shall sit and rule upon his throne; and he shall be a priest upon his throne."

—Zechariah 6:13

Zerubbabel was neither a king nor a priest. The Messiah is both.

Secondly, this Person was to build the temple of the Lord and bear the glory:

"Even he shall build the temple of the Lord; and he shall bear the glory."

—Zechariah 6:13

This cannot refer to a third material temple which the Jews vainly expect.

Nor can it refer to the second temple built under Zerubbabel. That building was mean and contemptible when compared with Solomon's temple, and no extraordinary glory arose to Zerubbabel from its construction.

The temple intended is the church of God—the temple of the living God and the pillar and ground of the truth.

This temple was to be built in a glorious manner in the days of the Messiah and was to consist of both Jews and Gentiles.

The prophet accordingly says:

"They that are far off shall come and build in the temple of the

Lord."

—Zechariah 6:15

Those who were far off are the Gentiles. They were to be brought near and joined with the Jews in one spiritual building.

The counsel of peace would therefore be between them both.

This was exactly fulfilled by Jesus the Messiah. He made peace between Jews and Gentiles and united them in one body.

He broke down the middle wall of partition between them and reconciled both unto God through the cross.

He Himself is the chief cornerstone:

"In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord:

"In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit."

—Ephesians 2:21–22

Jesus is therefore the Branch who builds the true temple of the Lord and bears the glory of it.

of the Lord. In this way, the counsel of peace would be between both Jews and Gentiles.

This was exactly fulfilled by Jesus the Messiah. He made peace between them, joined them together in one building, and became Himself the chief cornerstone:

"In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord:

"In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit."

—Ephesians 2:21–22

The Ephesians, who were Gentiles, were thus built together with believing Jews into one spiritual temple. Jesus now bears all the glory of that building.

It should further be observed that the Person described by Zechariah had not yet grown up out of His place, but it was promised that He would do so:

"He shall grow up out of his place."

—Zechariah 6:12

This cannot properly refer to Zerubbabel. He had already grown up and had for some time been actively engaged in rebuilding the second temple, as appears from the prophecy of Haggai.

The Messiah, therefore, and not Zerubbabel, is the Person intended.

His name might properly be called the Branch above all others. He is the most glorious Branch of David's family and was to spring from it when that family had become like a root in dry ground.

This agrees exactly with the low condition of David's family in the days of Jesus and with the humble appearance He made when this Branch first sprang from it.

The Septuagint renders the Hebrew word translated Branch by a word which properly signifies the rising of the sun, or the part of the heavens from which the sun rises.

This may refer to the Messiah as:

"The Sun of righteousness,"

who was to arise with healing in His wings.

—Malachi 4:2

For the same reason, Zacharias, in his song, calls Jesus the Messiah:

"The dayspring from on high."

—Luke 1:78

From this title, the Latin word Oriens—the East, or the Rising One—may also have come to be used as a name for the Messiah.

Some have therefore thought, with a measure of probability, that this is the meaning of the expression used by Tacitus when he says:

"Many were persuaded that the ancient writings of the priests contained a prophecy that, at that very time, the East should prevail."

In conclusion, the Messiah is the Man whose name is the Branch: so frequently spoken of by the prophets, so long expected by the Jews, and brought forth in the Person of Jesus.

I shall conclude the whole with the words of Zacharias:

"Blessed be the Lord God of Israel; for he hath visited and redeemed his people,

"And hath raised up an horn of salvation for us in the house

of his servant David;

"As he spake by the mouth of his holy prophets, which have been since the world began:

"That we should be saved from our enemies, and from the hand of all that hate us;

"To perform the mercy promised to our fathers, and to remember his holy covenant;

"The oath which he sware to our father Abraham,

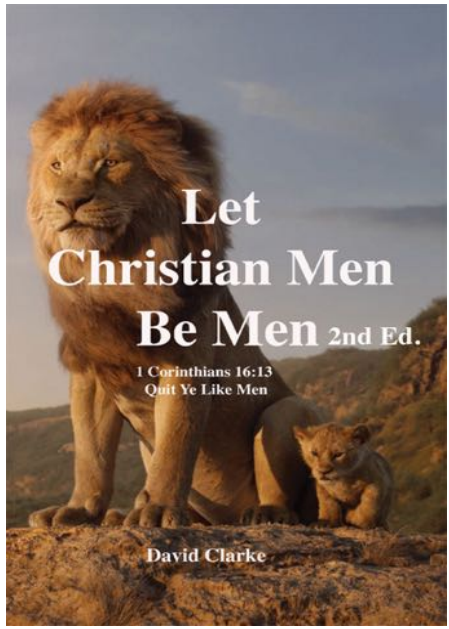
"That he would grant unto us, that we being delivered out of the hand of our enemies might serve him without fear,

"In holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life."

—Luke 1:68–75

FURTHER PUBLICATIONS

LET CHRISTIAN MEN BE MEN



David Clarke

Originally published as *The Bierton Crisis (1984)*, this deeply personal and theological account traces the journey of David Clarke—minister, church secretary, and committed member of the Bierton Strict and Particular Baptist Church, a historic Gospel Standard cause founded in 1832.

This book documents a significant crisis that shook the foundation of the Bierton Church in 1984. As doctrinal errors and questionable practices crept into the fellowship, David stood firm in proclaiming the doctrines of grace—particularly Particular Redemption—and affirmed that the gospel of Christ, not the Law of Moses, is the believer's rule of life. His stance led to a withdrawal of fellowship, yet the church never terminated his membership, desiring his return.

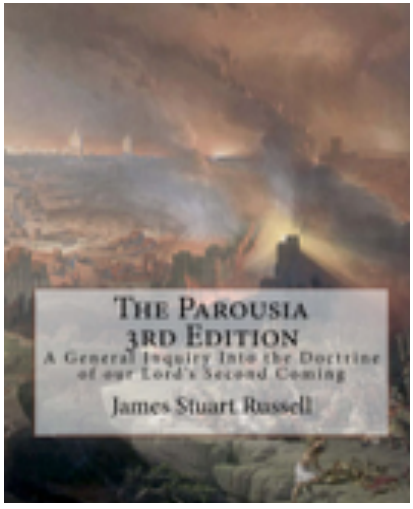
David's testimony not only exposes the theological and ecclesiastical struggles within the church but also chronicles the unexpected closure of the Bierton chapel in 2002, while he was engaged in gospel mission work in the Philippines. Upon returning

to the UK, he discovered that a new, unelected group of trustees had taken control of the chapel, denied his rightful membership, and ultimately sold the historic building as a domestic property in 2006.

This book is both a warning and a call: a warning against doctrinal compromise and a call for ministers and believers to ground their faith and practice in Scripture alone—not tradition, not personal opinion, and not the fear of man.

Let Christian Men Be Men is an appeal to return to biblical conviction, gospel clarity, and godly courage—so that men may truly stand, teach, and live as Christ's ambassadors in an age of confusion.

THE PAROUSIA

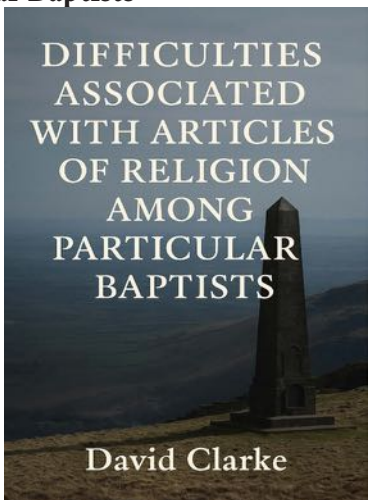


James Stuart Russell

The Parousia, by James Stuart Russell, is a detailed study of the New Testament teaching concerning the second coming of Christ. Russell examines the principal prophetic passages and argues that many of them were fulfilled in connection with the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70. The book is widely regarded as an important and influential presentation of the preterist interpretation of biblical prophecy.

DIFFICULTIES ASSOCIATED WITH ARTICLES OF RELIGION

Among Particular Baptists



David Clarke

This book has been written for those who find themselves troubled, confused, or even discouraged by the Articles of Religion—or Confessions of Faith—that are often required for church membership among Particular Baptists.

Throughout church history, believers have sought to express their shared understanding of the faith through creeds and confessions. While such documents can be helpful in clarifying doctrine, they can also become stumbling blocks when their language is unclear, their assertions go beyond Scripture, or when they demand an advanced theological understanding that many sincere believers may not yet possess. This is especially true for those new to the faith or those whose consciences are bound by the Word of God alone.

Drawing on personal experience, the author highlights the challenges faced when joining a Particular Baptist church, particularly in regard to conflicting or historically ambiguous articles of faith. The events surrounding the Bierton Strict and Particular Baptist Church in the late 20th century serve as a case study—demonstrating the real pastoral and theological difficulties that can arise when church membership is restricted by confessions that are misunderstood, misapplied, or internally inconsistent.

Yet this book is not a rejection of Articles of Religion altogether.

On the contrary, it affirms their importance when rightly used. The aim is not to cast off doctrinal clarity, but to call for honesty, humility, and scriptural fidelity in how churches apply such confessions. The book offers a comparison of four historical Baptist confessions, discusses controversial additions, and explores how such documents should function in the life of a church governed by grace and truth.

May this book serve as a helpful guide to those who, with a sincere desire to follow the Lord Jesus Christ, wrestle with the tensions between confessional loyalty and biblical conviction. Let it also be a call to church leaders to handle such matters with care, patience, and a deep understanding of the Gospel of Christ.

Isaiah 52:8 Thy watchmen shall lift up the voice; with the voice together shall they sing: for they shall see eye to eye, when the LORD shall bring again Zion.

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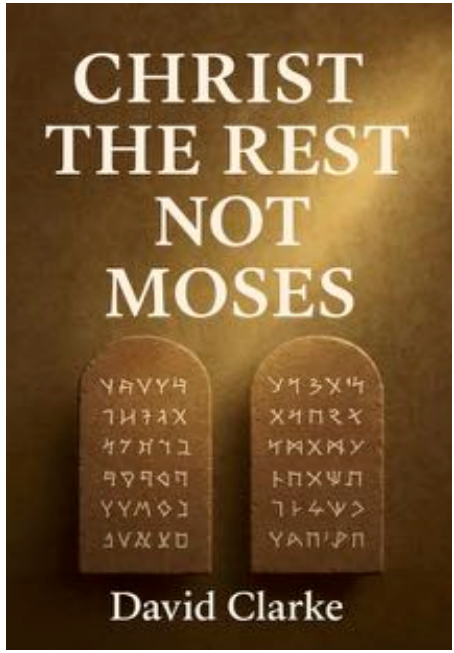
CHRIST THE REST, NOT MOSES



By David Clarke
Author of Converted on LSD Trip

"Let us labour therefore… to enter into that rest." – Hebrews 4:11

What is the true rest promised to the people of God? Is it found in observing days and laws — or in Christ Himself?

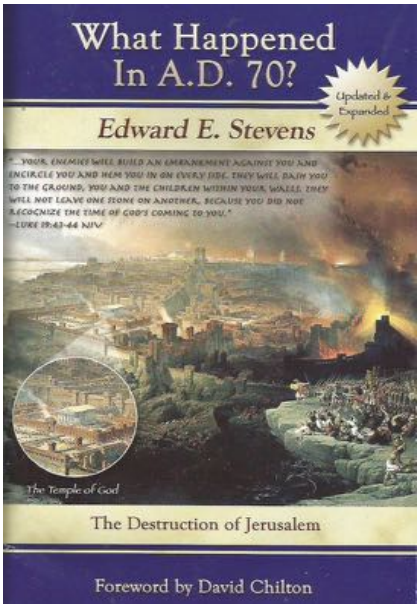
In this bold and thought-provoking work, David Clarke draws from Scripture and personal experience to confront a foundational issue at the heart of Christian doctrine: justification by faith alone.

Clarke, once rejected by a Gospel Standard minister over his understanding of Hebrews 4, writes not to stir controversy, but to call believers back to the simplicity and power of the gospel. With a serious tone, pastoral heart, and unwavering conviction, he urges readers to turn from legalism and shadows to the finished work of Christ.

Written especially for those who love the doctrines of grace, yet feel isolated or misunderstood, this book is a call to clarity, courage, and confidence in the rest that is found in Christ — and Christ alone.

This is not merely a theological issue. It is a matter of liberty, peace, and the very ground of our standing before God.

WHAT HAPPENED IN A.D. 70



Ed. Stevens

This book introduces a view of Bible prophecy which many have found extremely helpful in their Bible study. It explains the end time riddles which have always bothered students of Bible prophecy. It is a ***consistent view*** which makes the book of Revelation much easier to understand. It establishes when the New Testament canon of scripture was completed, demolishes the liberal attack on the inspiration of the New Testament, and is more ***conservative*** on most other issues than traditional views. And there is ***no compromise*** of any essential Biblical doctrine of the Christian faith.

The key to understand any passage of scripture has always been a good grasp of the historical setting in which it was originally written {***audience relevance***). Two thousand yeas from now our history, culture, politics and language will have changed dramatically. Imagine someone then having to learn the ancient language of "American English" to read our USA newspapers! If they saw one of our political cartoons with a donkey and elephant, what would they think? How would they go about understanding

it? Not only would they have to study the language, but also our culture, history, politics and economics. The same applies to Bible study. If we are really going to understand what all the "donkeys and elephants" (beasts, harlots, dragons, etc.) Symbolize in the book of Revelation, we will have to seriously and carefully study the language, history, culture and politics of the First Century. Of course, the truths essential for salvation are couched in simple language that everyone can grasp. But there are numerous scriptures in the Bible which are "hard to understand" (cf. 2 Pet 3:16), and Bible prophecy is one of those things which must be approached with much more focus on the original historical art cultural context (audience relevance)

One of the main purposes of this book is to provide a closer look at the historical framework behind the New Testament. Many have found it helpful to lay aside (at least temporarily) the legion of speculative opinions about the book of Revelation, and look at a more historical alternative, which is that ***the book of Revelation was written to the first century church and had primary relevance to them.*** It warned of events that were about to happen in their lifetime, and prepared them for the tribulation and other events associated with the End of the Jewish Age.

Atheists, skeptics, Jew, Muslims, and liberal critics of the bible use the supposed failure of those end times events to occur in the First Century to undermine the integrity of Christs and the inspired NT

writings.

Non-Christian Jews laugh at this supposed non-occurrence, and use it as evidence that Jesus is not the Messiah. Their forefathers in the flesh rejected Jesus in His first coming because He did not fulfill the Old Testament prophecies in the materialistic and nationalistic way that they were expecting, even though Jesus told them that His Kingdom was not of this world, and that it would be within them instead. Yet it seems that many futurists today are expecting that same kind of materialistic and nationalistic kingdom to arrive at a future return of Christ Are they making the same mistake about the Second Coming that the Jews made about His first coming? Jesus repeatedly said His Kingdom is "not of this world" and that it would "not come with observation." It is a spiritual entity, and it has arrived We live in it. Both futurist Christians and non-Christian Jews need to realize this.

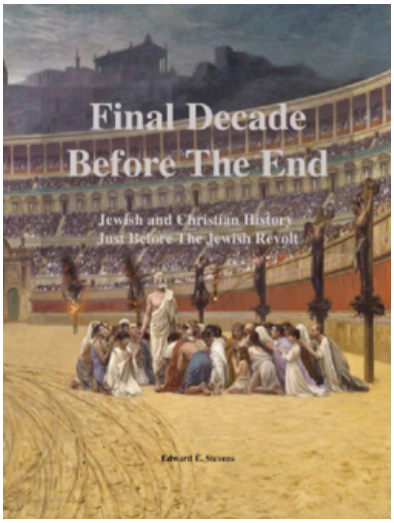
Christians are finally beginning to seek alternatives to the fatally

flawed ***futurist*** interpretation. This book introduces the Preterist view.

"Preterist" simply means past in fulfillment It means that Christ has already fulfilled His promise to return and consummate redemption in Himself and His ongoing spiritual kingdom (the church). We should be like the noble-minded Bereans and "search the scriptures daily to see whether these things are true" You might want to have your Bible open alongside as you read

April 17,2010

FINAL DECADE BEFORE THE END



Ed. Stevens

Ever since the booklet, **What Happened In AD 70?** was published in 1980, there have been constant requests for more detailed information about the Destruction of Jerusalem and the Jewish, Roman, and Christian history associated with it. Over the years since then I have studied Josephus, Yosippon, Hegesippus, Tacitus, Suetonius, Eusebius, the Talmud, Midrash, Zohar, Pseudepigrapha, Church Fathers, Apocrypha, Dead Sea Scrolls and other Jewish/ Christian writings, trying to determine exactly what happened, when it happened, and the effect it had upon the Church.

Then in 2002, after I began to promote J. S. Russell's view of a literal rapture, the demand for historical documentation of the fulfillment of all

eschatological events dramatically increased. That forced me to dig much deeper. So in 2007 I put together a 21-page chronology of first century events. Two years later in 2009, we published a more substantial 73-page manuscript entitled, First Century Events in Chronological Order. That helped fill the void, but it did not go far enough. It only increased the appetite for a more detailed and documented historical reconstruction of first century events.

The book of Acts does not give a lot of details about the other Roman and Jewish events that were happening while Paul was on his various missionary journeys. For those events, we have to go to the other contemporary Jewish and Roman historians such as Josephus and Tacitus. The closer we get to AD 70, the more important all of those Jewish and Roman events become. They form an important backdrop behind the Christian events and show how all the predictions made by Jesus were literally fulfilled. Every High Priest and Zealot leader that we encounter from AD 52 onwards are directly connected with the events of the Last Days. Things are heating up, not only for the Christians, but also for the Jews and the Romans.

Paul on his missionary journeys was clearly following a plan which was providentially arranged for him by Christ: (1) to plant new churches among all nations and not just Jews, (2) appoint elders and deacons in every church (Acts 14:23; 1 Cor. 4:17), (3) write inspired epistles to guide them, (4) instruct his fellow workers to "teach these things to faithful men who would be able to teach others also" (2 Tim. 2:2), and (5) establish the Gentiles in the Church and make them one united body with the Jews (Eph 4). Everywhere Paul went, he followed this pattern. We see this clearly as we study the historical narrative in Acts and Paul's other epistles that were written during this time. These are essential patterns that the apostles evidently bound upon both Gentile and Jewish Christians, and which were intended to be the pattern for all future generations of the eternal Church (Eph 3:21; 2Tim 2:2).

We begin our study by looking at the most likely dates for Matthew (AD 31-38) and Mark (AD 38- 44), and then proceed to the first three epistles of Paul (Galatians, 1 & 2 Thessalonians), which were written on his second missionary journey (AD 51-53). Including these five books in our study allows us to date all twenty-seven books of our New Testament, and show how the NT canon was formed and completed before the outbreak of the Jewish War in AD 66. The study of New Testament canonization in itself is a good reason for reading this work, without even looking at the

historical fulfillment of all of the end-time prophecies that we document here.

After looking at the dates for those first five books, we then move on into the third missionary journey of Apostle Paul which began in AD 54. It was during this final dozen years (from AD 54 until AD 66) when the birth pangs and signs of the end started increasing in both intensity and frequency, along with a quickening pace of NT books being written. We show how 19 of our 27 NT books (70 percent) were written during those last five years just before the Neronic persecution (AD 60-64). The Great Commission was finished, and the rest of the end-time events predicted in the Olivet Discourse were fulfilled during that time of "tribulation" upon the church and the "days of vengeance" upon the unbelieving Jews (Luke 21:22).

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April 17,2010